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LETTERS

TO

EMINENT INDIANS.

By SADYK DOST.

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PREFACE.

MANY enquiries have encouraged us to reprint the letters of Sadyk Dost in a collected form. The letters themselves do not profess to illustrate anything new in literature, their pretensions are limited to an attempt to show the Indian public something of the world in which they live, by introducing them to the men whose influence on that world cannot be disregarded. A strong man will, in India, always count for much in any estimate of his own time; while a weak man may leave behind him an even more marked influence, by the unhealthy growths he may suffer, or the irregular and ill-regulated opinions to which his weakness may give the opportunity for an undesirable vitality. But weak or strong, men cannot be called to great positions in India without also being called upon to exercise an individual and a personal influence, which it would be well for themselves and the country they recognised, more often than is now the case, as an inseparable condition of high place and large official power. So true is this characteristic grasping of Indian Society after the guiding influence of individuals,—so true is its habitual leaning upon men, rather than upon policies or systems apart from men,—that what is said of great officials may equally be said of non-officials: if a man can lead, he will inevitably find himself elected

to the duties and responsibilities of a leader. Sketches such as those of Sadyk Dost, which deal with causes quite as much as with characters, and which show the inter-dependence between character and career so especially observable in the work done by Indian worthies, may, we would trust, have a purpose to serve in our Indian world somewhat more useful than the whiling away of a leisure half-hour. And, thus believing, we commend them in their collected form to a public, which has already shown them more favour than they may have perhaps deserved.

The series of Letters were introduced to the Indian public on the 5th April 1884 with the following remarks:—

"THE agitation which, during the past eighteen months, has so fully occupied men's minds in India, has had the effect of giving an impetus to the growth of public opinion, and of creating an intelligent interest in the administration of the country, all the more marked from the apathy which preceded it. There is probably not a journalist in the country who has not learnt from his increasing correspondence of this quickening of the public pulse. This increased interest in the various measures of the Government, and the more critical analysis to which they are subjected, have naturally given rise to an excusable curiosity as to the personnel of the men who are placed in authority over us. In Europe, but perhaps more especially in England, the life of a public man is as an open book which those who run can read,

whereas in India, outside of the presidency cities or beyond the sacred circles of Simla, Ootacamund, and Darjeeling, little is known of the individuality or the bent and proclivities of those who have to guide the executive. The ordinary criticism of public measures which finds expression in the Press affords no clue to the motives that may be supposed to influence a particular policy or line of conduct. It is in the belief that the time has arrived when something of the fierce light which plays about our public men at home may be allowed advantageously to fall upon their more prominent confreres in India, that we have accepted the offer of a veteran penman to produce in our columns a series of letters to Eminent Indians. Having the fullest trust in our contributor's judgment and experience, we have decided to publish these letters without exercising the usual editorial privilege of revision, and, therefore, the opinions expressed will, in no way, involve the ordinary policy which guides this journal."

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LETTERS TO EMINENT INDIANS.

I.

TO THE MARQUIS OF RIPON, K.G., &c.

MY LORD,—If I commence a series of letters to Eminent Anglo-Indians by an epistle to yourself, I shall recognise your unique official position and your merits as a subject for current history, and be as little wanting in loyalty as in my duty as a chronicler. You are one of the few men who, having closed a career and forestalled the verdict of posterity by compelling the judgment of their contemporaries, have begun in middle life a new ascent of the Temple of Fame. But he who would succeed in such an attempt must have a great past to encourage him, and the voice of a people in his favour. You, my Lord, through some mysterious evolution of self-love, chose to make the essay, although your past was a record of failure, and the voice of your countrymen prophesied of you doubts, and even your friends could only do you the unkindness of parading your really excellent intentions. Excuses for an appointment are its severest condemnation. To find reasons for the selection of a man who assumes to be a

statesman in his honesty, his earnestness, and, save the mark, his good intentions—is to more than damn him with faint praise,—is to admit that his promotion cannot be defended. The mediocre worthiness of the average Englishman is not the quality we should expect to find as the only recommendation for the greatest office which can be held by any subject. But, my Lord, although I am chiefly concerned with your second—your Indian—career, it is necessary for me to glance at that earlier career which had brought back to your house the coronet of a Marquis, and which ought to have found its termination on that 4th of September, ten years ago, when, at Brompton, the most Conservative of Churches found a place in her capacious bosom for the most Radical of noblemen and most doctrinaire of Liberals. In a free country, a man has a right to efface himself, provided he accept cheerfully the obscurity he may have rashly elected. You, however, had the consolation of an undeserved reward to bear you company in a retirement which few regretted, which your party blamed, but which your country did not mourn. Your mistake has been that you did not efface yourself effectually. Passing this by for the moment, your life divides at that autumn morning when you deemed it your duty to become the weekly astonishment of London. Up to that point you had achieved such a solid reputation for willing industry as not unfrequently brings a fourth-rate

politician into second-rate positions. But in your case, aided by the coincidence which made the year of your birth the year in which party accident happened to require that your father should fill the office of Premier, and by that other accident which started you in life as an ornamental diplomat, the unkind fates had thrown you into a position where your self-appreciation was matched against Yankee astuteness, and your fine natural sense of your own importance against American self-interest. In the one really great appointment which fell to your lot before you, in a moment of misconception, decided to accept the Viceroyalty of India,—I mean the Chairmanship of the High Joint Commission which made your Chief's new-fangled notion of an age of arbitration ridiculous,—you failed in the most signal way to rise to the height of the occasion. If ever an English Ambassador was reproached by those by whom he had allowed himself to be outwitted, you, my Lord, were reproached by the Americans when they advertised for claimants to enable them to spend the millions of the Alabama award, the payment of which you had decided justice demanded of your country. It has been finely said "that patriotism is a noble virtue when it secures our independence without depriving us of our humanity." But you, my Lord, at Washington in 1871, and again at Calcutta in 1883, were not content to be simply patriotic; you sought to fulfil what in the jargon

of the group to which you belong are called the higher duties which we owe to humanity. Your patriotism affects to rise above the selfish and petty considerations of a mere love of country, with the result that your countrymen have to deplore that you cannot present them with a less showy but more genuine article. You possess none of the old spirit which was content to do a duty as it presented itself; but then you do possess that worst form of political conceit, the special and noxious flower of these days, where those in power affect the quality of prescience and are only content with the statesmanship which usurps the functions of Providence. In your English career and in your English rewards, your Lordship is a bright example of a time when a man's party is a more serious consideration than his country, and when loyalty to a political chief is a higher duty than the rendering of service to a people. It is not every Lieutenant who makes a good Captain; and, as a rule, the more naturally and easily a man fulfils the part of a subordinate, the less likely is he to discharge efficiently the office of chief. You, from an industrious Under-Secretary, became a plodding Minister, an unobserved but useful member of a Cabinet, with the talents of a clerk and the tastes of a trusted *précis* writer. If you did not shine, you were for routine work eminently safe, and you were secured from the trial of direct responsibility under which men of your calibre so

often fall below the reputation which a capacity for hard work has gained for them. But, my Lord, if I fail to see in your English career any promise of that capacity for high command demanded in an Indian Viceroy, I am only repeating the wonder with which the news of your appointment was received. A time of fierce struggle between parties induced you to abandon that retirement which, all things considered, best became you, and to give such help as made you an embarrassment to those who had been your colleagues, but who were scarcely prepared to run the certain public disapproval which would wait upon your recall to the Cabinet. You were therefore sent to India because you were an inconvenience in England. Yet fortune, charmed with the audacity of your re-entrance into the political arena, seemed bent on winning to your side, if not the suffrages, at least the sympathies of your countrymen at home, and of the splendid community whose efforts in the service of this magnificent India, and in the cause of civilisation it became your duty, as it ought to have become your pride, to direct. It is seldom any one has cause to rejoice over an illness as a stroke of political good luck; yet, peculiar as the experience might be, you have enjoyed it.

You had the game in your own hands, if only you had known how to play it. But to all your other faults was added the shortcoming of an ungenial manner and

the arctic frigidity of a social circle which no guest ever entered feeling he was welcome, and never left feeling he would be missed. Then, too, you are wont to use with disconcerting effect an embarrassing crystal, the loss of which to you would apparently be as fatal as the loss of her wand to the fairy of our story books. Faults of temperament combined with faults of training to disincline you to recognise how great was the opportunity which fortune had thrust upon you, and once lost, so easy a key to popular favour is never placed twice in the same hand.

We in India have little sympathy with party animosities, and were disposed to give you a fair field, and when it seemed as if you had risked your health to satisfy what you deemed a high duty, we were disposed to add to a fair field a very considerable amount of favour. Fortune thus removed the worst obstacles to your success, and how have you requited her? Coming after a Viceroy who, in spite of his occasional flashes of brilliance, did deserve the taunt of your colleague that he was all that a Viceroy ought not to be, honesty compels me to confess that to-day you stand before England and before India the greater failure of the two. The causes of your want of success in India are those which made you a prey to the smartness of the Americans, the inability of a man intended by nature to fill with credit to himself the part of a well-informed

Under-Secretary, to grasp great questions or appreciate great issues. You are an omnivorous reader, and perhaps the best informed man of your acquaintance. You labour mightily at the drudgery of office, and yet find time to peruse all the best books as soon as they appear. Paradoxical as it may sound, I believe you would succeed better if you were less completely posted up upon most questions. You would be less inclined to take the itinerant dissenting preacher as your standard of mankind; and if you knew less of books, it might be that you would know more of men, to the great advantage of your own reputation and to the benefit of those with whom you have made discontent a virtue. After war—peace: after an unsettling Viceroyalty—rest. That you were not blind to the requirements of the country and the time, I infer from your speech to the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, when, as the result of six months' experience of your great office, you said—"It seems to me what India wants at the present moment is peace and rest, that she may devote herself to the advancement and progress of agriculture and commerce." Still earlier, and after you had been some three months an inhabitant of the Indian Capua, you were evidently struck with the way in which Europeans and natives worked together in all great public movements; and you were good enough to say you regarded the Patriotic Fund as "a happy omen of that ever-increasing

co-operation which ought to exist, and which I trust will exist more and more between men of all classes of the Indian community." These were wise and weighty words. Men began to think that you had been misjudged, and that a prudent caution would mark your Viceroyalty, for four days later you took occasion to make a new profession of policy, and you then said — "I am strongly convinced that reform, to be real and effective, must be tempered by reverence, and must be a growth, and not a mere construction." Men are apt to believe what they desire most to think. Communities look for the practical suggestions in the speeches of men in high place. The search for contradictions is often the unthankful task of the unwelcome critic, or the discredited opponent, and yet in that same speech, when you—fluency is the badge of the group with whom you are most directly associated—so skilfully indicated the only way in which reforms should be dealt with in India, you also indicated the rock upon which your administration was so soon to split by alluding to "the superstructure of that wider and higher life which it should be the great aim of our Government to foster and advance." Now, my Lord, how have you acted up to your declarations? Instead of giving the country peace and rest, your reign has been an unexampled success as a propaganda of agitation; instead of fostering the co-operation of all classes

of the Indian community, you have with a marvellous completeness undone the work of a quarter of a century and dislocated Indian society. You have replaced co-operation by the wildest jealousies, and mutual confidence and respect by a sense of wrong on one side, and an incessant declaration of specious grievances on the other. You, my Lord, have found it consort with your duty to your country and your obligations to your countrymen to furnish the natives with a cry against both; you have taught the natives how to denounce Englishmen, and have found your teachings improved upon by that great apostle of platitude, the Chief whom you serve with an obsequiousness which rises almost to the respectability of a political virtue. The man who insisted in September, 1880, that reform should be a growth and not a mere construction, in May, 1882, forced a reform upon the empire "not primarily with a view to improvement in administration," but as "chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education." Evidently your search after "that higher and wider life," to which you alluded as the aim of your government, misled you as to the real facts with which you had to deal. India is not a new and unorganised country; it is not a land in want of the simplest forms of civilisation; it is not a field for social and political experiments; nor is it a land which can be safely Anglicised. You, my Lord, appear to believe

you are the first of the Viceroys, and the only man who has had the wit or wisdom to apply "Western ideas and Western progress" to this country; and yet, strange as it may sound to your Lordship, it is only fifteen years since the wise and gallant Irishman, as his first achievement in India, met and subdued by his personal qualities the brave and unfortunate Shere Ali. Twelve years ago your colleague, my Lord Northbrook, had just commenced his griffinage, and eight years since your predecessor was committing the first of his mistakes—the Fuller scandal. You are fond of appealing to Lord Mayo as the founder of many of your own worst blunders; but do you think his reforms have had time to pass from the state of mere construction to that of a healthy and natural growth? A great deal of your failure depends upon one of the characteristics of a weak man—an inability to avoid resorting to surprises. It was this tendency which made you pass at a step from the chair of the Grand Lodge of England to the cushion of the penitent at the Brompton oratory,—which caused you to spring the mine of the Ilbert Bill upon an unconscious and peaceful community,—which induced you to startle Anglo-Indians by the grossly unjust Roorkee Resolution,—which caused you to throw away an Indian surplus twice—once into the pockets of Manchester, and once into the coffers of the English War Office,—and which led you to

convert even the Bengal Tenancy Bill, a familiar enough subject of discussion, into a surprise and a rout for the landholders. A rule which proceeds by surprises is a rule which ends by provoking popular discontent. You, my Lord, found India at peace with herself, and you have surprised her into dissatisfaction with England, and worse than all—you have surprised her with your novel interpretation of patriotism into the conviction that England is not only a stranger in India, but an unsympathetic and selfish stranger who penetrated by a knowledge that her rule is evanescent, is only bent upon seeking her own advantage. My Lord—upon such a result of philanthropic rule, upon such a result of the search after "a higher and wider" political life—I decline to offer you my congratulations. It is not alone in domestic affairs that your Lordship has been a mistake and a failure; in political matters you have manifested all the faults of the school which has muddled the affairs of Egypt and messed every foreign question which has come before them. You spoke well at Rangoon,—so well that, instead of smiling at the Simla negotiations with a gang of minor officials from Mandalay, I could not but feel pity for England that the hands which guarded her honour were so feeble. Pity is akin to indignation as well as love. You were only weak to the Burmese; but on the great question of Central Asia you were culpable. Russia is the acknowledged rival of England.

She has for more than a score of years advanced as time and opportunity offered. The embarrassments of a feeble and shiftless Government in Egypt indicated perhaps the time for her to move on Merv; but your Lordship furnished her with the opportunity when you struck 60 guns and the strength of a division off the resources of the Empire whose affairs you have so triumphantly mismanaged. To you it was given to make India contented with English rule in a way which should settle the question of the loyalty of generations yet unborn. You might have made salt cheap for all time and have given salt to the cattle as well as the people; you had only to be guilty of the poor justice of spending in India and on the Indian people the excess of Indian revenue: but the love of "the higher and wider life," whatever that may be, did not prevent you from bidding for the vote of Manchester in the Liberal interest by surrendering the Indian import duties to Manchester clamour, or from paying a million of Indian surplus to a War Treasury capable of appreciating such assistance in the face of an unacknowledged war in the Soudan. Your place, my Lord, in the estimation of your countrymen in India, has been faithfully shown by the neglect you met with at Madras. Madras has held itself aloof from the excitement which marked the agitation in Calcutta. It has claimed to be calmer in temper and more just in principle than the capital;

and yet, so far as your welcome was concerned, the result was the same.—*Turpe est in patriâ peregrinari*—you, my Lord, can no doubt complete the quotation.

But while you have alienated your countrymen, have you gained the affections of the natives? They themselves declare they admire you for what they expect to receive. They distrust you now, and when they understand your peculiar interpretation of friendship for India, they will, as you yourself begin to see, make you a conspicuous example of the fickleness of popular favour. Your policy towards the natives is the dangerous policy of unasked-for and unnecessary concessions. You create grievances in order to leave to your successor the peril of attempting to satisfy them. You are like the man who believed he could teach a fox to adopt goslings. He found that no fox worthy of the name would refuse a gosling. My Lord, strive as you may for the higher and wider life, you may rest assured foxes do not adopt goslings—they eat them.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

II.

TO H. E. SIR JAMES FERGUSSON, BART.,

Governor of Bombay.

SIR,—You were one of the very latest births of a moribund conservatism. While the star of Beaconsfield was paling before the rays of a triumphant Gladstone you started from the ruins of a falling ministry to uphold conservative traditions in Bombay. Almost contemporaneously with your arrival here your great chief had fallen and an epoch of Liberalism and universal brotherhood was inaugurated. The signs of the times have long since been in favour of free criticism and freedom of speech; you yourself can scarcely afford to despise those great principles now, though it is not so certain that you will appreciate or cordially approve them. It is nevertheless in the full confidence of engaging your fair and impartial attention by this frank address that I apply myself with a light heart and clear conscience to an examination of your leading characteristics.

It seems but a short time ago that the acting Governor of Bombay, attended by the usual *cortêge* of inferior dignitaries, drove down to the Apollo Bundur to welcome you on your arrival at the capital of the Presi-

dency over which the eminent gentlemen of Downing Street had appointed you to rule.

I remember the impression that you created on my mind as you mounted the pier steps. I remember forming a rapid opinion that if you were not likely to attain a niche in history by the brilliancy of your administration, at least it might be plausibly inferred from your external demeanour that you would preserve that level of respectable mediocrity and innocuous benevolence, which preserves a Governor from reproach, though it may not entitle him to admiration.

Coming as a successor to the turbulent disquietude engendered by Sir Richard Temple's omniscience and exaggerated centralisation, people looked to you for a period of rest. They relied upon your ignorance of details; upon the respectability of your principles; upon your previous experiences in the Antipodes (concerning which, however, they were, for all practical purposes, entirely in the dark) for the recognition of your true position. Anticipations were hastily formed; sanguine ideas obtained prevalence; and when upon the morning after your arrival you rode unattended to a well-known restaurant, and partook of a homely drink with the unaffected air of a plain English gentleman, society was plunged into a state of mental doubt. There were few seers wise enough to interpret the portent. We scarcely knew whether to look upon it as

a scandalous innovation upon the traditions of Red Tape, or the morning star of a new day in gubernatorial cosmopolitanism.

Your Excellency will probably be acquainted (for who, indeed, is not) with the Swedish Councillor's world-famed aphorism,—"It requires little wit to govern" which might well be blazoned in letters of gold upon the walls of Government House. But though wisdom in one sense is not a necessary constituent in the character of a successful ruler, there is another quality which very certainly is. It will probably be conceded to you that, as regards the negative qualification, you were admirably equipped by nature for the arduous duty you had undertaken; but when the Indian world, looking back upon your career, asks itself whether you were equally well endowed with that positive qualification of TACT, the unanimity of its unfavourable reply can scarcely be doubted. It is owing chiefly to your want of tact, combined with an obstinacy, which is, to a certain extent, a national characteristic north of the Tweed, and a pampered pettishness which is an inevitable result of your unfortunate situation, that you have succeeded in alienating a large proportion of that respect you might and ought to have earned by your painstaking application and undoubted energy.

I imagine, Sir James, that few Governors have been more desirous of conciliating public opinion; and I

believe that few, if any, have failed more lamentably than yourself in doing so. Where you have asserted your individuality, you have, I think I may say invariably, become obnoxious to the most severe and effective criticism. Where you have been content to merge yourself in other masses of abler opinion, your influence has been unfelt. The impression left on my mind by a survey of your administration is, that you have been either a cypher or a militant entity. This is not success: it is failure of a pronounced type. I do not say that you have exercised a dangerous influence; your rule has not been strong enough to be formidable; but the traces of your hand, wherever they appear markedly, are distinguishable by resultant irritation.

The position of a Governor is undoubtedly a very trying one: his surroundings are despotic, and he assumes the headship of a powerfully organised bureaucracy. Though you came to this responsible office as a consistent conservative; though of all the political atmospheres obtaining in the civilised world none is conceivably more fostering and more adapted to the growth or confirmation of that creed; yet it behoved you at least to see that conservatism did not degenerate, on the one hand, into a petty illiberalism savouring of a barbaric despot, while on the other, in its more legitimate spheres, it expanded most

amazingly to the approaches of a pernicious liberalism, accredited solely by the fact that it came wafted down from Olympus.

Sir Richard Temple was commonly believed to be a liberal until he unadvisedly espoused the cause of conservatism in the whirl of a general election ; in his case men were frequently much exercised to reconcile liberal professions with illiberal acts until that remarkable Governor supplied the solution and at the same time an explanation of his political vacillations by blossoming into a conservative failure. You, on the contrary, started as a conservative : you may be said to have assumed your gubernatorial dignity under the ægis and subtly penetrating influences of a popular liberalism : in some of your larger measures you have not fulfilled the hopes of honest conservatives who looked to you as a permanent drag upon the revolutionary coach-wheels recklessly driving to perdition with a crew of Grant Duffs and Ripons and such like dangerous empirics : but in most, if not all, the minor events of your term of office you have displayed a curious narrowness of view, an imperfect sympathy with public opinion which does the highest credit to the great school in which you were trained. Can it be possible that, having posed so long as a conservative failure, you contemplate an apotheosis as a Liberal success? It may be that when some large official measure is sent down from

Calcutta under the express sanction of the Liberal Government, you have neither the hardihood, nor even the inclination, to resist it. In this way you have certainly shewn an enlightenment beyond what your party consider themselves justified in fixing as your maximum. The operation of ultra conservative traditions upon your political mind appears to have been diametrically opposed to probability and experience. This, your Excellency, is not without significance; but few will think that your fame has suffered from acts done under the influence of this anomalously generated spirit. I have also heard it said that your knowledge of the mass of Indian people, &c., and the conditions under which they live is necessarily so limited that you probably believe, in all sincerity, that the time is ripe for foisting all the newest developments of English Liberalism upon a society some thousand years behind our own people in all their views of life and trade. But in many details of less public importance, which need not be particularised, you are apt to show a small and illiberal spirit, which is only too well accordant with the worst products of generations of conservatism.

I have often heard it said—I have even seen it in print—that you can make a capital speech. You should disabuse your mind of that idea at once. Your predecessor was always supposed to be a second Demosthenes. I have heard him giving utterance to all sorts of ideas

in very indifferent language, and I have had no hesitation in putting him down as an oratorical fraud. It is now matter of history that English audiences have emphatically endorsed my verdict; but I fear that his inordinate vanity will never suffer the sweet words of flattery, to which he was accustomed in the East, to become silenced by the unprejudiced ridicule of the West. Yet he was in every way a better speaker, or rather a less bad speaker than yourself. If his delivery was bad, his language turgid, his self-satisfaction only too apparent, there was at least a residium of sound sense and knowledge under the frothy words. You would do well to be warned in time. The sycophantic adulation of a small society is a species of criticism which I trust your mind will prove robust enough to estimate at its proper value.

Perhaps, your Excellency never appeared in a less dignified light than in those two small squabbles with the Yacht Club and the Judges. It is very fitting that a Scotch Baronet should be a rigid moralist, but you should remember that *auream quisquis mediocritatem diligit tutus*—and when you soar to the lofty pinnacles upon which eminent theologians can scarce breathe the rarified air of fine drawn polemics, you are incurring risks from which your national caution ought to guard you. There can be no doubt of the iniquity of dancing in Lent, but your Excel-

lency evidently felt on safer ground when you pathetically pointed out that such proceedings were worse than wicked—they were vulgar! At the same time, was it not a little incautious on your part at the very moment when you were posing as the champion of Sabbatarianism in its widest sense, to accede to that Political Agent's request to hold a Durbar, and make purely secular—though of course not immoral—speeches at Mudhol on a Sunday?

In your ridiculous affair with the Judges, there was a good deal to be said on both sides: and it must be a great consolation to you to feel that the contempt showered upon the leaders in that little social drama was shared by people who are, at any rate, said to possess a certain amount of sense.

On both these occasions the Press was extremely adverse to you; but I have always noticed that Governors profess to despise the opinions of mere newspapers. I can well imagine you exclaiming with Sir Fretful Plagiary—"The newspapers! Sir, they are the most villainous, licentious, abominable, infernal. Not that I ever read them! No! I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper." You may rest assured, however, that the voice of the Press can never be, and ought never to be, despised. It is merely the insolence of ignorance that can afford to hug itself in defiance of external criticism.

Was not the Press unanimously against your view of that unfortunate tragedy in Junaghur? You took your own course. The public were outraged at the terrible "blunder somewhere," and their feelings were accurately represented in the Press. But you were above that kind of criticism; and a most lame and impotent resolution was the result. The world howled in derision, and the Supreme Government quashed it. There was no saving of dignity there in the long run, your Excellency.

But that which I had already written concerning your want of tact and grasp of proportion has received within the last few days two peculiarly apt illustrations. You have reached the very *nadir* of public opinion; and you already stand convicted of an impolitic warmth where cool judgment was required, and of an equally impolitic tepidity where the exhibition of a little dignified anger was reasonably demanded of you. Before this appears in print, all India will be discussing your action towards Surgeon-Major Banks in the light of your action to your nephew. Let us see exactly what grounds your Excellency had to justify the extraordinary conclusions you arrived at. *Fons et origo malorum!* the *Ahmedabad Hitechu!* a paper whose insignificance is its best recommendation to your attention. Your Excellency's mind is probably not habituated to modes of exact thought; and it is, therefore, idle to enquire of you, step by step, how you came through the various stages of excogitating

final opinions upon the many interesting points that called for your consideration. The case could have been paralleled by the incidents of hundreds of hunting parties every year; but to be wholly wrong is a less crime in your Excellency's eyes than to be partly right and partly wrong, from which we may infer that your Excellency is a thorough man. And you are so, Sir James, in this case —a thoroughly wrong man. Has your Excellency never beaten a native? I seem to have heard somewhere of a very disgraceful scene in one of your Bombay Collectorates, wherein your Excellency played the part of flagellant to another man's servant. You would do more to regain public confidence and esteem by re-considering the decision in Dr. Banks' case than you are probably aware of. But it requires a strong man to own himself thoroughly wrong, and you, Sir James, are unfortunately not a strong man—but a petulantly weak one.

One of the highest duties laid upon a Government in India is, that it has still occasionally to sit in the gate and judge the people. This is a function of unexampled honour, linking the veneered India of to-day with the splendid and venerable past. Discharged with the grace of impartiality, it seats the ruler firmly in the affections of one class of his subjects, and in the proud respect of those others with whom fair-play is an hereditary claim to superiority. How, Sir James, have you discharged

this function? You have assumed it so lightly as to prove you cannot comprehend its greatness or its true uses in a mixed society, where an appeal to yourself as the final judge should be as rare as true confidence, and as effective as a victory. Great duties, undertaken in your spirit, cheapen the Government which performs them thoughtlessly. Contempt is the twin sister of respect, as you have unfortunately discovered by the result of the unjust ignorance and ignorant injustice which are the only qualities you have illustrated by your treatment of Dr. Banks.

Ah! Sir James, the truly great man knows how to be conveniently deaf. There is no folly comparable to that of the man whose ungoverned tongue is the servant of his injudicious eyes. The old saying is still a wise and a true saying—*Etiam oblivisci quid scis interdum expedit.*

It is a common complaint that jobbery has flourished under your rule; that appointments have been given with an eye to personal regard, rather than the demands of departmental efficiency. This is a cry which rises periodically, and it would be hard to say that you are not as much sinned against as sinning in this respect. You would be wise, however, to scrutinise carefully the rightful claims of candidates; there is no more fruitful source of discontent than a feeling that patronage is being abused. And although I cannot but admire your consideration for the convenience of ladies, I am com-

pelled to warn you that suspicion of petticoat influence will lower you incalculably in the public eye. Your acquaintance with the civil list, and the family relations of Government servants, is perhaps unrivalled, and I believe you honestly try to please in all cases where departmental claims do not clash. But it is well to bear in mind the danger of excessive urbanity untempered by just discretion; the fact that a lady is delighted at the prospect of a hill station is not a true determinant between the claims of rival candidates; and in conferring appointments, your Excellency must recollect that thousands of eyes are jealously watching the manner in which your patronage is bestowed, and acutely criticising your Excellency's motives.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

III.

THE HON. MR. T. C. HOPE.

"BUT on the whole a good man of business,"—These, my dear sir, were the last words of a conversation which had for its subject, yourself. You have an intimate acquaintance with an ideal Theodore Cracroft Hope, to whom five-and-twenty years ago this would have appeared an inadequate summary. Nor is it only in the heyday of youth that we draw imaginary pictures of

ourselves, and soothe our secret vanity with the thought that all who know us will see the composition in the same flattering light.

The Anglo-Indian world seldom lends itself to these pleasing illusions. If its judgments are shallow, it may be pleaded that its knowledge is necessarily limited, and its memory cannot but be short. Very few of my readers, I am almost ashamed to say, could give anything like a consecutive account of your services to the State during the last twenty years. Not one in a dozen even of those who are entertained at your hospitable, but somewhat 'demi-official,' table, are aware that their host is a man of no small learning and cultivation; that he could give points in divinity to most divines in India and run out an easy winner; that he is an authority on some abstruse points of archæological research, and has been listened to with interest by the Queen herself as he discoursed of the wonders of Indian architecture; that he knows more exactly the rate per foot that should be paid for earth-work or window-sashes than most Executive Engineers; and that in accurate, detailed knowledge of native life and character, and facility in one at least of the many languages of the country, he has few equals. There have been many men of subtle brain and nimble tongue in Her Majesty's Civil Service, and in the ranks of her detective police; but I doubt whether any of them have excelled you in the sagacity,

tenacity, and insight with which you have dealt with native character. It would be easy to enumerate other qualities and accomplishments, now insufficiently recognised, but surely it will be seen that the intelligence which delights in theological problems, which is unremitting in attention to the minutiæ of one of the most intricate subjects on the round globe—the Public Works Department of India, to wit—and yet is capable of hunting the most accomplished liars the subtle Aryan race has yet produced into an abject honesty of bewildered confession, is no common one. But it has the faults of its qualities and is inordinately given to detail. The elephant ought to be able to pick up a pin, but an elephant that spends its time inserting a sinuous trunk into every hole and corner in search of pins when its business is to pile timber, stone, and earth in the State timber yard evokes but a qualified admiration.

Similies are seldom fair, and to this one you would probably reply that Indian work, rightly understood, is nothing more than an infinite series of minute details, in accurate knowledge of which the real strength of a Government officer is shown. It is quite true that those who have been brought into official contact with you have been surprised by the thoroughness of your work, and that you have frequently been of great service to official chiefs who were glad to avail themselves of a knowledge they had not the patience to acquire. But

from a Minister of Public Works at this crisis more is demanded than merely business qualities. To the world outside the official pale, it would appear that the opportunity, which a strong man in your position might profitably seize, is on the point to arrive. The pendulum movement which rules our administration is, perhaps, more strongly marked in the branch over which you preside than any other, and it now swings towards a fearless and vigorous assumption by the State of its responsibilities as the manager of a property capable of infinite improvement. But, seen from within the walls of your office—if so peripatetic a person can be said to have an office—the position is full of difficulty. You are not so much the director, as the instrument, of a policy. The shifts and meannesses of poor households are more familiar to great Governments than liberal strokes of policy. And it is to these you aptly bent your mind. There are maxims in our Public Works administration, which are, perhaps, nowhere written in so many words, but which it would not be difficult to formulate : do all that you can for credit and a fair show, but do it, if possible, with other people's money ; every permanent charge you admit, every claim to pension you allow, will be counted against you. If we may trust the Mosaic record, the department that built the Pyramids was similarly organised, and it is no new thing to demand bricks without straw. With the best will in the world to be generous, a conscien-

tious Minister must come to be regarded, if I may quote the words of Scripture, as "an hard man, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strawed."

It is doubtful whether, with all your tactile faculty, you have grasp enough to seize the larger policy which would appear to invite you. It is also uncertain whether you will justify the hopes raised by your accession to office among the Civil Engineers in the service of the State. Into the long story of their grievances I do not propose to enter. You have always shown yourself willing to listen to temperate representation, and I have often thought that you cherished something like a professional fellow-feeling with Civil Engineers. In the days when at Surat you directed the intermittent labours of a dreamy and gigantic Yorkshireman, you discovered how much of interest lies in the calling. You are firmly persuaded you would make a capital Executive Engineer yourself,—nay, it is said at Simla, that you perform the functions of one in addition to your own proper work. It is unfortunate that while you have failed to satisfy the black-coated members of the department, you have succeeded in irritating their powerful red-coated rivals. Much may be said in praise of the solidarity of this estimable branch of the Army and you have recognised a strength which you have, perhaps wisely, made no overt attempt to break. It may be that the dead-lock in public affairs, produced by the

ineffably foolish and futile Ilbert episode, has stayed your hand, as it has vexed your spirit and tried your patience. You might well have borne a better part in this egregious business, and it is perhaps your invertebrate behaviour on this occasion that makes me doubt whether you will rise to the situation which the next few months may offer. This, however, is not the only reason I have for writing in so hesitating and doubtful a strain. The laws of character and temperament are framed in iron, and there is no escape from their bonds. There are those who are born to cut blocks with razors, and I fear you belong to the generation. Seldom have I laughed longer or more loudly than when your notable project for a uniform unit of office furniture passed through my hands. No one will deny that each Baboo should have sufficient elbow room and suitable provision made for his inkstand, papers, and red tape; but never yet did a Public Works Minister signalise his accession to office by acting as an amateur upholsterer, and making native carpenters' lives a burden till they had experimentally learned the lowest rate at which each table-leg and each chair-back could be supplied. Unhappily, this niggling tendency towards the infinitely little affords food for more than laughter. And it is accompanied by a curious distrust, which may be one of the results of your profound belief in the doctrine of Original Sin. A man who would cross-examine a coolie to

convict an Engineer can scarcely hope to be popular. Nor are contractors likely to be made more honest by too vigilant inquisition. The records of the Department might, perhaps, furnish grounds for two axioms,—every contractor is a rogue; the bigger the contractor, the bigger the rogue; but they are an insufficient basis on which to form a line of conduct for dealings with contractors.

I have just mentioned your belief in a religious doctrine. As a rule, convictions of this kind should be safe from public comment. But in this most imperfect world, and in this most imperfect India, where public life is narrow and feeble, a study of character involves reference to beliefs as well as acts. And you have been, from time to time, impelled, by a righteous zeal in the cause of religion, to bring your beliefs before the public, and have thus made them public property. In your frequent voyages home, you noticed with regret that, instead of the works of Goulburn, Liddon, or Pusey, yellow-covered French novels of pernicious levity, and English fiction of a more harmless kind, formed the staple of quarter-deck literature. This was sad enough; but when you saw atheistic and rationalistic books passing from hand to hand, you could no longer contain yourself, and, with honourable warmth of feeling, you denounced the practice of an atheistic propaganda in the public Press. It is not to be wondered at that there

is no more earnest upholder of the authority of the Church than yourself. No Bishop is so bumptious (and bumptious Bishops are by no means unknown in India) as to esteem his office more highly than you would place it. At times you have had occasion to grieve over the lukewarmness of the clergy with whom you have been brought in contact. Many of these poor fellows, pre-occupied by domestic cares, think more of their social position, their salaries and pensions, their health, the upbringing of their numerous families, and other merely mundane matters than of their high calling. To some you have acted as a spur and a warning, and with others you have worked profitably and harmoniously. The truth is, you would have made a very good parson yourself, so far as parish work goes, although the bent of your studies inclines more to ritual and theology. I fancy I can hear a Royal Engineer exclaim—"How well we could spare him to the Church!" To convictions as serious as yours, a gibe of this sort is as chaff before the wind, and I only mention it as indicating one phase of a character which is not without complexity. It is possible, indeed, that while commenting on a character, I have done some injustice to the actual facts of a career, and to the extent and variety of your knowledge on educational, economic, and fiscal questions. I hope you will believe that, though I am persuaded the time has come when those who occupy high places and take high

pay should, in the public interest, be submitted to somewhat closer scrutiny than heretofore, I have no wish to depreciate either your work or your attainments.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

IV.

THE HON. MR. J. GIBBS, C.S.I., C.I.E.

SIR,—I am unable to decide whether the smile that comes unbidden as I write your name at the head of this paper is a tribute to your good qualities as a man, or a reflection on your capacity as a statesman. In these grim and earnest times a reputation for amiability is not highly prized; and yet there is no country where urbanity and gentle manners have had more influence than in India. Social and public life are not so strictly separated as elsewhere, and our estimate of official capacity is often based on impressions gained at the dinner-table or in the drawing-room. It is given to few to pry into those mysteries whose outward symbol is the mahogany box borne on the incurious back of the slouching red *chuprassee;* but though the Chubb lock remains inviolable, irreverent critics find a key to its contents in your social complaisance. They say the words 'I concur' are, and must of necessity be, your most frequent contribution to the collective wisdom of

our rulers. If this is an unfair criticism, you are by no means the first to be unjustly judged by the keen but not unkindly cynicism of Anglo-Indian society. And yet you command the unfeigned respect of a portion of this society by the placid dignity with which you represent a principle dear to most of the departments of Government, and especially dear to the mediocrities to whom it is a sheetanchor of hope,—that of the right of seniority to high place. Viewed in this light, my dear sir, you are little short of monumental. The most searching scrutiny into your official career, while it shows a long and useful tale of service, reveals no strongly marked incidents. Unlike your contemporary, Sir Richard Temple, you have not recorded in official hyperbole the marvellous progress of a new province, nor "bossed" a scientifically organised famine. Your name is not associated with any sensational measures, nor are your opinions largely quoted. Even among the people of your own province, Bombay, your name, while gratefully remembered, is less frequently mentioned by village grey-beards than those of Sir Barrow Ellis, "Revenue Assbroon" (Ashburner), or Mr. Hope, "the man who knows Guzerat." If there is any reason in the hackneyed aphorism of Montesquieu as to the happiness of the country whose annals are tedious, then has yours been a happy life. There are thorns in every cushion, however, and you may remember how a Bom-

bay journalist, whose undoubted strength as a writer was sometimes marred by a tendency to malice, was in the habit of singling you out as a butt for attacks meant for the Civil Service in general. Let those laugh who win. The journalist is now knocking in vain at the doors of small constituencies in England, one of the forlorn hopes of the Carlton Club; while you have soared serenely until by sheer dint of living you have reached the presidency of the Council and have actually sat for a time as Vice-Viceroy.

While admitting all that there is of accidental in this temporary elevation, it would be foolish, as well as ungracious, to belittle it or to discount its dignity. The qualities that have made you so admirable a figure-head for public meetings of a charitable, social, or philanthropic sort, and that have led you to indulge in the small pomps of Freemasonry, seem to fit you for such a position. A decorative caryatid figure may be sculptured out of wood, and it may not be absolutely necessary to the stability of the fabric; but we are all glad to see the entablature of the House of State supported with an air of gravity. There are those who affect to rate at a low value the qualities that go to make a good president or chairman. The truth is, that this position demands qualifications not easily to be found. To compare very small things with very great ones, I may remind you that one of the difficulties of the parochial

life of the last century was to find persons suitable for the offices of Beadle and Mayor. This difficulty, sir, runs through the whole fabric of English existence, and it is mere truth to say that you would have made an excellent Lord Mayor if your hereditary connection with the City of London had not been broken by your adoption of an Indian career. In other words, you are one of those conciliatory beings to whom it comes like second nature to preside acceptably at public meetings. The texture of your mind, so far as it goes, is judicial; you are not easily carried away by enthusiasm even on subjects with which you are sympathetic; you are entirely without spite, and though constitutionally inclined to take a *couleur de rose* view of things, you have too much common-sense not to know—if I may venture to put a common-place in transatlantic guise—that the philanthropic 'boom' frequently ends in the economic 'bust.' Some stronger men in our Anglo-Indian ranks completely fail in this apparently easy business. They are nervously anxious to say something wise or useful, and are tiresome; or, bankrupt in the small change of platform banalities, they are abrupt and inarticulate. You, sir, may be safely trusted to dole out to each his due share of compliment and remark; and if your level flow of commonplace is not illumined by flashes of genius, nothing unpleasant is ever allowed to intrude, and you may be relied upon to 'see fair.' Few men have had so large

an experience of public-meeting life in India, and none have come out with so much credit. You have never gushed in the headlong fashion peculiar to Sir Charles Turner, nor have you indulged in dreary sermonising like Mr. Raymond West; for you are not vain like the former, nor an incurable prig like the latter. It is one of the misfortunes of the Indian journalist that this phase of public life is here so maimed and meagre, and I regret that I can find little to quote that would make the world prick up its ears among your many utterances. A few more Hunters needing employment and charging round the country on oratorical campaigns may remedy this defect. Meanwhile, it is this phase of your career that I have watched with most interest and gratification. Whether discoursing of coins and cromlechs to the small and staid audiences of the Asiatic Society, or distributing prizes to girls' schools, or presiding at parting dinners, or Freemasonry gatherings, your conduct has ever been urbane, graceful, and kindly.

Of your benevolent sentiments towards the people of this country there can be no doubt. These sentiments led you to anticipate the notable discovery which Professor Max Müller recently announced to the world to the effect that the natives of India are eminently truthful. More than ten years ago you rebuked the Bania Knight, Sir Munguldass Nathubhoy, in the Bombay

Legislative Council, for asserting that his countrymen habitually told fibs. Sir Munguldass did not say this in haste, like King David, but announced it as one of the conclusions of his life's experience. Your amiable belief in human nature was shocked by the cynicism of this avowal. You warmly protested that our fellow-subjects were rather truthful than otherwise, and; full of confidence in the sunshiny affability of your own nature, you declared that you could make any one of them tell you frankly all that was in his mind. To give point to your contradiction, you employed that vernacular idiom which makes the word 'stomach' stands for mind. You were thinking, my dear sir, of the lank *Kúnbis*, who in your district days were naturally eager to discourse with a person at once amiable and powerful. That you should have mistaken the rustic simplicity of manner of one class for the character of a whole community has always appeared to me a pleasing proof of an infirmity of judgment which has a bright and endearing side. It is no wonder that you number many warm friends among natives of all ranks and conditions, nor is it a matter for surprise that your opinions and conclusions on subjects connected with them are less valued by Europeans than your memories and experiences. That you entirely failed to perceive the momentous import of the Ilbert Bill, and were thrown on your beam ends by the storm it aroused, is

really no great reproach to you. Nine out of any ten Bombay men would, like you, have considered it of little moment. The tenth might have possessed insight, courage, and promptitude. You had no more of these precious qualities than the rest of the Council, and you dutifully followed your appointed leader. The general idea of the Bill jumped with your amiable pro-native notions, and for the rest, you considered it to be a matter so small as not to be worth fighting about. That you should afterwards repent of the line you took in this matter is intelligible enough; for though as honestly anxious to benefit the people of India as many who make louder protestations, you are not of those fanatics who would sacrifice the country for a theory and impale an Anglo-Indian for a principle. Your conduct in committee, when Messrs. Ilbert and Quinton wished to avoid giving us the full advantages of the text of the Concordat, was sensible and praiseworthy. But what a chance for honourable distinction was missed by you and the rest of your colleagues when the Bill was first proposed.

The dead past must bury its dead. There is no room or time for unavailing regret, and I must turn rather to the consideration of what you are, than to speculations on what you might have been! The philosopher, who would study a character, must take account of smaller matters than affairs of State, and deem no

occasion too trivial to afford a clue to its unfolding. A passion for the rusty half-pence of decayed dynasties is said to be a sign of a discursive mind. Of a distinguished numismatist who formerly occupied a seat in the Council, a flippant Viceroy is reported to have said "That dear old B—y!—he hits anywhere but on the head of the nail." We do not need the authority of Scott's charming study, "the Antiquary," for the conclusion that archæological pursuits beget a discursive and gossipping habit, and surely the coins of India are as interesting and suggestive a subject as the beetles which delight a Viceroy who is not flippant. So although it is possible to know all about the tetradrachms of Enthydemus, and yet to blunder in Indian finance, I will not pretend to apologise for your numismatic hobby. A great German has remarked that collectors of antiquities frequently begin by acquiring objects merely, but end by achieving real scholarship. This has been to some extent your good fortune, and there are many who would forgive your somewhat languid grasp of the public affairs of to-day for the sake of your knowledge of the past. It was your *penchant* for archæology which led you to take an interest in the Scottish pedagogue who formerly taught the young Parsees of Bombay to speak his own lowland Doric, but who is the now Archæological Officer of that Presidency, with leave to spend each hot weather in

Edinburgh. And it seems clear that you consented to the disestablishment of that other archæological officer whose grotesquely illustrated volume, with its lists of works of reference and other odds and ends will long remain the greatest curiosity ever issued as an official report. Your support was given to the latter as long as it was practicable, and I am assured it was not without reluctance that it was withdrawn.

It would be idle and impertinent to drag out into the light details of but little interest for a public which is quite willing to believe that your influence in this, as in other matters, was judiciously exerted.

It is to be regretted that the generation which can best appreciate you is passing away from the country, and that but few of the many readers who share this epistle with you and me, can have an opportunity of listening to the conversation of one who has a considerable store of interesting personal recollections, and who has made many friends. At Simla you close like a flower in frost; but on a genially warm Calcutta day that recalls the soft airs of a Malabar Hill verandah, and beguiles you of the lassitude left by that memorably dismal season when all Simla society wasted like jockeys in training or snow-wreaths in thaw, you can be a most pleasant and instructive companion.

I have exhausted the space at my disposal, and may not dwell at length on the many interesting associations

of your bygone Bombay days. You and I might find such gossip agreeable, but it would have no great interest for the reader of to-day. Of your respectable judicial achievements, I have spoken as little as of other incidents of your service. The ease, leisure, and pleasantness of the old days have passed away from India for ever. The new generation toils with a querulous and restless eagerness formerly unknown. But though laborious in deed, as well as loud in professions of zeal for the welfare of the country, I doubt whether it will include many more amiable examples of benignity of manner or kindness of heart than yourself.

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

V.

TO MR. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE,
Secy., Govt. of India, Home Dept.

MY DEAR MR. MACKENZIE,—Your worst enemies—and every man, even a successful Civilian, has enemies—have never been able, and, indeed, have never attempted, to deny that your extraordinary official success is the legitimate result of very exceptional and extraordinary official powers. The service to which you belong abounds with industrious officers,—industrious in that sense of the word which so easily confounds official

efficiency with the process of perpetual official scribbling. By the outside public the district, or secretariat, official, who scarcely allows himself time to swallow his meals in the intervals of his work, who neglects all the claims of domestic and social life in order that his arrears may be worked off, is not regarded as the type of what a district, or secretariat, official ought to be. You have never been the slave of this cant, and to this fact most of your extraordinary success is undoubtedly due. The saying is attributed to you that "industry is the homage which stupidity pays to genius," and whether you originated the epigram or not, you will perhaps admit that you are a living illustration of its truth.

The characteristic peculiarity of your official intellect is rapidity. The official conclusions which are arrived at by most men, and even superior men, as the result of study and reflection, seem to come to you by a faculty which resembles intuition. Hence, your work gives you no trouble, and the labour you devote to it is merely employed in the artistic elaboration of detail, and is, indeed, a labour of love.

It is well known to your intimate friends that your ambition extends beyond the "ignorant present" of an Anglo-Indian officialism to the alluring future of an English political career. You are wealthy. You will be in the prime of life when it will be possible for you to retire on the excellent pension of your service. You

are blessed with a splendid physical constitution. You have a carefully cultivated fluency of speech, you have a stock of well-polished platitudes, a fund of diligently prepared impromptus, and you have no political principles or convictions of any kind. As you yourself might say, such things are the inconveniences of the statesman, but still these are splendid qualifications for the career you propose to yourself when you leave India. But are they sufficient? I fear not. Your own utter inability to realise their insufficiency is the result of rather painful ignorance in two directions,—your natural ignorance of the conditions and influences which govern political success in England, as distinguished from success in India, and your still more natural ignorance of certain defects in your mental and moral constitution, which those influences would test and bring into prominence in a very crucial manner indeed. Is it the good fortune, or misfortune, of high Anglo-Indian officials that their personality has little or no bearing either on their official position, or on that by which their official position is represented to themselves—their pay? The high Anglo-Indian official is represented to the Government and the public by minutes, notes, memoranda, red tape, sticks of sealing wax trimmed with maccaroni called *chuprassees*, and three or four thousand rupees per mensem. His future lies mapped out before him, and the present is only valuable or interesting to him as a means of making that

future more comfortable and luxurious, not more secure. The high Anglo-Indian official can, therefore, as it were, afford to lead a description of life which is simply impossible for men who have to depend in any degree for success on the respect, sympathy, or admiration of their fellowmen. Substantially independent of public opinion, they can afford to disregard it; and to do them justice, they do disregard it. In Calcutta, when invitations, carried by scarlet *chuprassees*, are flying about, society shudders but—submits. That fearful livery is too often, the sure forerunner of bad entrées, ullaged champagne, high meat, and all the terrible accompaniments of an entertainment given to save appearances and to save money. If any social beatitude or spirit of real hospitality were consistent with these economical festivities, they might be forgiven; but, as a rule, the spirit which presides over them is as congealed as the bad ghee used in the cooking, and the conversation which gives them their dreariness, as flat as the wine. This is an iniquitous beverage which must be especially manufactured for such sacrificial symposia, and which some jocose Frenchman, with an eye to its future destination, in a moment of scornful inspiration, ventured to call—champagne. But these forlorn and dismal ceremonies are only a small representative indication of what a high Anglo-Indian official can afford to do and to be. Too often his whole later life in the country is, as it were, laid down on the same lines. The more he gets, the

less he spends. The less he spends, the more sensible he becomes that expense in this country is a mistake. He will keep his money for that career which will be open to him at Home, when Calcutta no longer tempts him to a restrained extravagance, and Simla no longer demands of him the pleasant tasks of the mutual admiration society. But all this time there has grown round his heart, and round his intellect, and round his sympathies and feelings, the fine but tenacious meshes of a net from which no exertions, however vigorous, however supported by talent or wealth, can ever set him free. Therefore, my dear Mr. Mackenzie, be wise, and wise in time. The alluring pathway which it is your ambition to tread is strewn with the bones of wrecked reputations—Anglo-Indian reputations, the men who have gone before,—men as able, as wealthy, as distinguished, as utterly unfit to put themselves *en rapport* with English public feeling as yourself. Even here in India you have failed to identify yourself with any popular or even official movement. You have never led, but you have followed in a way to impress the public mightily with the talent of the service, and of one member of the service in particular. You have spoken much, and the public have, as a consequence, forgotten much. Your eloquence is creditable to your memory; it is as enjoyable as a well-made *soufflée*, but its flavour speedily evaporates, and it leaves no man convinced, no man the wiser, or the better informed. You are,

therefore, good at a pinch of which you receive proper notice, and are eminently useful to the man whose favour it is your duty for the moment to conciliate. You possess an acquired sweetness in your oratory which deceives the unthinking as to the lurking bitterness which mars your favour with society, and which is too ready to show itself not to be a characteristic of your mind. Perhaps, the best illustration of this failing was your somewhat vulgar attack upon the Chief Justice. I say vulgar, because all exaggeration is vulgar, and you descended in that attack to an exaggeration of smartness, and an excessive affectation of the lordliness of superior knowledge. Surely, the public were to be excused if they laughed consumedly at the idea of one of the chiefs of the clique of paper-experts of India assuming to correct the inexperience of the Chief Justice. The indirect duties of an official position may sometimes serve as an excuse for a mistake in substance; but when that error is emphasised by a mistake in form, it is accepted as betraying, perhaps more than was intended, the true nature of the blunderer. Such mistakes go a long way towards settling the position of an official in public estimation; and if you have no position outside the official circle at all commensurate with the position you have with dexterous official strategy secured in that circle, you have probably to blame the revelation of your reserved self, made in that ill-conceived and ill-conditioned attack upon Sir Richard Garth, and a

practice in which you are an adept. I allude to the careful way in which you have removed every rung behind you as you steadily mounted the ladder of official prosperity. You are not the first instance—you will not probably be the last—of judicious ingratitude bringing an official at length within the shadow of the hand which bestows the Star of India. But I much misdoubt if Sir Alexander Mackenzie would be a name to conjure with in the precincts of Westminster, though it might lead you to the subdued greatness and mitigated renown of a Lieutenant-Governor. Can a man who is a great official in India, and yet who is not of India,—can a man who has reaped nothing but indifference from the public of India, because he has sown nothing but officialism;—can such a man change his nature or his habits, and hope to command favour from the most fastidious audience in the world,—an audience with an instinct for pinchbeck, and a healthy scorn for the merely pretentious? No.! Your ambition has mistaken your own powers, as well as their proper goal. Take warning by the fate of a Campbell, a Temple, and even of a Roper Lethbridge. Be content as you are. Life has a law of compensations. You have deserved your great success on every ground—for your talents, for your energy, for your industry, but, above all, for being—Mr. Mackenzie.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

VI.

TO THE RIGHT REVD. DR. MYLNE,
Lord Bishop of Bombay.

MY LORD BISHOP,—As traditionary receptacles of the infallibility of Church teachings, crypts of accumulated wisdom and unchallenged dogmatism, Bishops and Archbishops are recognised to be impervious to the critic tongues of vulgar and ignorant laymen. I must apologise for venturing to address your Lordship at all. I am scarcely sanguine enough to hope that the weak utterances of an impartial and unsectarian outsider will be suffered to penetrate that fine non-conductive atmosphere surrounding your Lordship's position, and isolating the treasures of your recondite learning and vast research from the blasts of hostile winds of less strait-laced doctrine. Perhaps, it is not altogether your fault that at a time when your mind should have been all receptivity, you were translated from the sphere of a humble tutor in a godly, if somewhat despised college, to an eminence of autocracy that naturally crystallised the crudities of your mental digestion beyond the likelihood of all further assimilative functions. It seems to me but as yesterday that I beheld your sleek—I had almost written smug, but I doubt that such a word in

such a connection would have been interpreted as rank blasphemy and heresy beyond the power of redemption—visage peering round the halls of Keble College. And when next a kindly fate permitted me the inestimable pleasure of beholding you, you were enthroned upon the episcopal chair of Bombay. It has been a source of wonder to me, and to many other humble mortals, to what you owed your sudden preferment. So much divinity doth hedge a bishop that the profane are naturally diffident in prosecuting enquiries concerning such great personalities. We are apt to wonder, to admire, and to be silent. But if your Lordship can supply any satisfactory explanation of the subtle connection between a moderately successful college career and one of the richest prizes—not to mention the responsibilities of the position—of the Church, you would be conferring a boon upon many an enquiring mind. I have never heard—though truly that may be due to the outer darkness in which my mind dwells—of any distinguished success achieved by your Lordship. As a factor of University life, you were, so far as the outer world knew aught of you, an insignificant cypher. As a tutor, one can only judge by results, and the red brick college which you condescended for some time to adorn was more famous for laurels won on the river and in the football field than in the philosophic portals of your academy. It has been gravely whispered that at an

earlier period of your career you tutored—privately—the hopeful scion of some noble family; or was it that you filled the delicate and well-remunerated post of private secretary to a great man? I also seem to recollect that while you were instructing the youth of Keble in doctrine and polite manners, one of your co-adjutors was a Mr. Herbert Gladstone. Possibly, in congenial studies of early English History with that young statesman, you were fortunate enough to lay the foundation of a friendship, the coronal of which is your present lofty state. But all these matters are mere conjecture, and had you graced the See as much by the dignity of your deportment in life, and by some administrative tact and occasional concession to the prejudices which you were inevitably fated to encounter, as you attempted to do by the severe classicality of some of your discourses and a chilly hauteur of demeanour, the people of your diocese would not have been so much inclined to enquire how it came about that a boy bishop was thrust upon them. Rightly or wrongly, there has always been a prejudice against youth in high office. You will probably reply that Pitt was not very old when he became Prime Minister, and that you see no reason to suppose that you were too young to be a bishop. But, unfortunately, we are not all Pitts; you, for instance, can scarcely lay claim—in spite of the tendency of your position to engender self-complacency—to any signal

qualities in yourself likely to reconcile us to your youthfulness. I could wish that a person to whom is entrusted the responsible and dignified office of an episcopate, even though it be only a colonial one as in your case, should be of a grave and reverend presence. Many felt the same when they first gazed upon your open and ingenuous countenance ; they were probably anxious to avoid hurting your feelings, but I can scarcely doubt that they pitied your youth, and would have been willing to stretch out a hand to your inexperience. It was, again I may say, not so much your fault as your misfortune. But what have you done to correct fate ? Have you shown yourself modest yet dignified ? Have you sought consistently to avoid friction with many prejudices ? Have you endeavoured to conciliate men older and wiser than yourself, who happened by the fortuitous turn of affairs to fall into a lower place in the social scale than that which you occupy ? Have you shewn yourself firm without arrogance, conscientious without pride ? These are some out of many questions which I would wish to ask your Lordship. Your own conscience will supply you, I doubt not, with very satisfactory answers.

Looking upon your character dispassionately, one cannot fail to become interested. I never see you, but I ask myself whether you are the unhappy creature of circumstances, or whether Nature made you as you are. I am inclined to think, for I am always charitable, that

the former is the true answer to my question. There is the stamp of the Bishop upon you wherever and under whatever circumstances one may have the fortune or misfortune to come across you. Not that a Bishop is a bad thing *per se;* but a little Bishop goes a long way in India, and Bishopdom, strongly dashed with priggishness of the most deadly and pronounced type, is very wearing to the constitution. I think that had you remained in the obscurity of your college life, you might possibly have just escaped being a prig; but in your altered condition, the development of this terrible quality has been rapid and complete. Left to yourself, you might have been a prig, but you could hardly have been such a pervading one.

Your career in Bombay has not been unchequered. Amongst other things, you recanted the most glowing of your early teachings here, and after having for many Sundays fulminated against the evils of matrimony, you astonished all your devout clergy—many of whom were, it is believed, contemplating divorces under the penetrating power of your rhetoric—by taking to yourself a young and charming wife. I do not blame you for doing so; it is probably one of the few wise things you have done. But I regret that so much eloquence should have been wasted. Was there not a very fervid sermon once delivered in the Cathedral on the subject of Jeptha's daughter, which many prudish ladies thought almost

verged on the immoral, while younger parishioners glowed with pride at having so fine a preacher with such highly-coloured views? And after that, not the deluge, but my Lord the Bishop leading a bride to the altar! It was confidently anticipated that the softening influences of a young and natural companion would ameliorate the more aggressive features of your character; but it is hard to see that the benedict Mylne is a whit less opinionated than the bachelor Mylne.

The proof of this is not far to seek. In an evil hour, your Lordship became a prude with conscientious scruples. The facts of that memorable episode must be fresh in every one's memory, and in none more so than in your Lordship's. Possibly, it was of a piece with the rest of your bad fortune that, during your tenure of office, a man who had been divorced should want to marry again, or some other equally delicate point, which, as your Lordship must be very conversant with the details of the matter, I need not recapitulate further. Whether the morality of the proceeding was good or bad from a theoretical point of view, did not seem to be altogether relevant to the matter at issue so far as you were concerned. But, prompted by your evil genius, it was here that you took your stand, and, with characteristic peremptoriness and want of judgment, you forbade your clergy to have anything to do or say with these poor would-be benedicts. As soon as your decision was made known

to the world, a great storm of indignation arose, and the mouthpiece of the whirlwind—unless I am misinformed—was the ablest controversial writer in Bombay, if not in India—Mr. Wordsworth. When once that powerful pen was enlisted against you, it would have been wiser to do almost anything rather than the one thing that you elected to do. Being a Bishop, you issued a pastoral, which all your clergy, I presume, declared to be a masterpiece of reasoned thought; some of them read it from the pulpit; most of them preached upon it; all declared themselves converted to your way of thinking. Then, Mr. Wordsworth criticised the flatulent production in the columns of the daily Press, and the world was really very sorry for you. You insisted on being made ridiculous, and no one can deny that your wishes in that direction were destined to a very complete fulfilment. But the spectacle of a Bishop being taken up and whipped like a schoolboy is not very edifying. I should recommend you—if indeed there is any need for the caution—to abstain in future from committing your opinions to paper. They sound very well in the pulpit—when you do not attempt to preach *extempore*;—but once subjected to keen and searching analysis, there is no telling to what a *flebile ludibrium* they may not be reduced. With this lesson ever before you, you should try to remember that the Bishop's mitre does not confer infallibility now-a-days; you should divest your address of that arrogance which

endeavours to order respect, but which excites, in fact, antagonism; you should bear in mind that, though a Bishop, you are a young and untried man, whose opinions will not be taken as gospel without careful weighing, and that, although in your own eyes, the Bishop of Bombay is one of the greatest, if not actually the greatest, figure on the world's stage at present, there are other points of view from which you may be regarded without the eye being dazzled by the effulgence of your state. I have heard that you sing well in a drawing-room; that your voice is powerful—surprisingly so, considering the insignificance of your appearance. I can quite believe it; it is exactly in accordance with the opinion I have always held of you, that you are a very little man with a very big voice.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

VII.

TO DR. W. W. HUNTER.

DEAR DOCTOR HUNTER,—I owe you an apology, not for including you in this series of epistles,—a distinction to which your position and your talents fully entitle you,—but for a certain want of fitness in the form of communication which I am compelled to adopt. A newspaper is, after all, the somewhat coarse product of a

somewhat coarse civilisation. Type and printer's ink have no very æsthetic side. The vehicle conveying an epistle to Dr. Hunter should be satin, the ink should be perfumed, and the quill, instead of a pen derived from the vulgar goose, should be drawn to slow music from the soft pinion of the cooing dove, for you, my dear Doctor, are nothing if not æsthetic! Your intellect resembles a tasteful and elaborate piece of confectionery, from which, through some oversight, the preserving element was omitted. Twenty years ago, you were, as one of the most brilliant products of competition—an Assistant Magistrate in the Beerbhoom district; and to that official accident you owe much, if not all, of the success which has illuminated the progress of your subsequent career. Your mind is essentially assimilative. It chanced that Beerbhoom gave you leisure to develop a taste for old Government records, and in those records you found a pabulum for that charming publication,—"The Annals of Rural Bengal." Your first Indian venture in print was in the shape of a series of sketches written for this journal in which I am now to appraise the position you have achieved amongst Anglo-Indians. Those sketches were—"The Station Cemetery," "The Tank Gone to Decay," &c., &c.; and, recalling those earliest of your efforts, I think those sketches ought to be reprinted now in book form, for they represent your marvellous powers of literary execution at their very best, and would do

more as it were, to individualise your fame than all the volumes of plagiarised statistics which you ever borrowed from abler men than yourself, and marred in the borrowing. For, my dear Doctor Hunter, I have always regarded you—I am afraid I must still continue to so regard you—as an eminent but melancholy illustration of the vanity of human ambition. You have strong points and weak points in intellectual organisation, and by an odd fortuity you seem to be rather ashamed of those qualifications which would ensure you a lasting fame, and are always insisting on claims to recognition which even your best friends cannot receive without the ready smile of amused derision.

Lord Macaulay has somewhere an admirable illustration of the peculiar causes which govern success and failure in the regions of imaginative effort. The great poet is the supreme genius who soars on the wings of imagination into the empyrean of thought. The great historian is comparable to some swift-footed and powerful animal which cannot soar, because it has no wings, but pursues its way to the goal with sure aim and undeviating pace. Now, between the soaring bird and the strong-stepping quadruped, there is another creature, the ostrich, which, although a bird, cannot soar at all, and whose wings, when she attempts to fly, are a snare and a delusion. Are the wings of the ostrich then of no use to the animal whatever? By no means. The

wings are powerful auxiliaries to the feet; and, so long as the ostrich keeps to the ground, she can outstrip horse and man, and, they say, the swiftest four-footed creature on earth. But every now and then, by some strongly persistent misconception of her own power, she attempts to fly and fails, and comes down flop, and the wings that she would believe ought to have saved her only serve to ensnare her to her doom.

You perceive, my dear Doctor, the obvious application of this pretty parable. You are, not to speak it profanely, an intellectual ostrich. You have not imagination enough to be a poet; you have not reflection or philosophy enough to be a historian; but you have some imagination and some powers of reflection; and these gifts, if used in combination, would have led to solid achievements, and insured to you a celebrity far more valuable and far more enduring than the ostentatious literary undertakings now associated with your name, or the meritricious notoriety you now enjoy. But so it is—so it has been—and so it will be till all the years of time shall be gathered up. That which a man is not—and that which he can never be—is that to which his fondest ambition will aspire; whilst that which he might be, by a judicious learning and exercise of his natural gifts, is that which he either neglects or holds relatively in least esteem. You are, or rather you were, a most charming and graceful writer of essays,

partly reflective, partly sentimental, wholly beautiful; and yet you would fain be a statesman, a philologist, and a historian; and the world, always willing to listen, to admire, even to weep over your sentiment, can never cease from laughing at your statesmanship, philosophy, and history. I have referred *en passant* to your literary execution—to the exquisite finish which characterised the best period of your earlier style. It is seldom possible for a conscientious critic to be able to praise without reserve or qualification; but in relation to this part of my subject, I am certainly in a position to enjoy that blessing now. Your literary style is, in my opinion, as nearly perfect as any literary style could possibly be; and in that happy mixture of strength, elegance, and simplicity, you stand an accepted and confessed master of expression.

This is a noble gift when to some noble purpose it is allied. The poet wept melodious tears over the dust of "the mute inglorious Miltons" in our English graveyards. He should have kept his tears for this living antithesis—the men moving amongst us who are anything but mute and anything but Miltons. Nature, my dear Doctor, gave you a voice and then fell asleep. She has so much to do that she often, very often, makes mistakes of this kind. Your mind may have been cast in a noble mould, but the die broke before the metal cooled.

To put it plainly and without metaphor. You are constitutionally wanting in those qualities without which no man ever achieved any solid, honourable or enduring fame—namely, independence, sincerity, and earnestness. Your intellectual energy is very great, but you have little, if any, intellectual earnestness, and you have no moral earnestness at all. And this reminds me of your great and remarkable powers as a superficialist, and of your decidedly Scotch aptitude for taking care of the initial number. If you had lived a century since, you might have been ranked with those moderate scholars who combined literary labours with the rather humdrum tasks of the village school-master. But the age in which we live has given value to an ability to cram. Men now rank high in many walks of literature and official life, who possess as their sole guide to success a capacity for mugging up a subject, and for casting behind them the knowledge they thus gain as soon as it has ceased to be immediately useful, or as soon as a new subject is presented to them by those whose business it is to find such men and to turn their exceptional gifts to account. But while the man who can mug could, if necessary, write you on short notice an essay on the Botany of the Chinese, it occasionally happens that he assimilates too rapidly, or, it may be, he betrays a too touching belief in the knowledge of others. There is a story told of your "Dictionary of the Non-Aryan Languages of India," which, perhaps, as it illus-

trates this point, you will forgive me for recalling to your memory. That Dictionary represented a vast mass of work, and where it leaned upon the knowledge of others, it was nearly perfect. Unhappily, you thought that to collate lists of words was equivalent to knowing a language, and in a miserable moment you gave the — I think it was the Sonthali — equivalent for "dead" as "goida polsmon." A ruthless Missionary, who knew Sonthali, was not slow to point out that, in the strange word, "polsmon," you had failed to recognise the familiar English "policeman." A few mistakes of this sort did not, however, prevent you from conferring upon India, with the help of Mr. Whitley Stokes and the countenance of Sir John Strachey, the exasperating boon of an official spelling. Englishmen have a right as free men to spelling at large. This right you insisted they should abandon, as you afterwards insisted they should abandon their right to be tried by their peers. You discovered that, in all languages, whether derived from the Sanscrit, the Arabic, the Chinese, or the Egyptian, the vowels have a French or Italian sound,—which is it? And the result is as lovely a confusion of tongues at the heart of any man could desire. The wondrous *Gazetteer*—that work so costly, so little used, and so be-praised; a work, which, rightly judged, is a monument to the foresight of John Strachey and the genius of the Civil Service, you

managed to bring out in England. I admired at the time your tactics ; but what I then feared has since come to pass. The preparation of the *Gazetteer of India* made you a stranger to India and an outsider to your own service. While you enjoyed your labours in England, satisfied with a paper promise that your time should count in this country, your fellows and rivals were establishing claims to the offices to which, it seems, you all the time aspired, by the strong right of actual work and undoubted service. Can it be wondered that you returned to India to find yourself distanced—to find yourself *de trop*, and a valuable embarassment to the Government which understood how useful you could be, but did not understand how to find you such a place as you, perhaps, fondly imagined you had deserved. That you should enter the refuge of the Legislative Council surprised no one except, perhaps, the able and independent lawyer to whose chair you were made, somewhat unfairly, to succeed. Then came the mild apotheosis of the Education Commission, a very miracle of commissions, whose chiefest results as yet are a huge yet able report and a photograph or two. But there is another side of the question. Now-a-days, the race of Chattertons is not extinct. Literature and poverty are still friends—too often, unhappily, close friends. In your case, dear Doctor Hunter, it is a happiness to know that literature has paid, and paid well. The Govern-

ment of India has shown its appreciation of your labours in a way which the most callous writer would approve. High pay has been supplemented by special grants, and altogether your literary lines have fallen in very pleasant places; for, are you not an LL. D. of your own University, a Fellow of many Societies, a successful man, and, above all, a C.I.E., with a special place at Indian Durbars? If I mistake not, you also had, though indirectly, a strong vicarious interest for some years in a daily newspaper published in this city. You were not a partner in the journal, not even as I understand it by that sometimes convenient Indian custom known as *benami;* and yet, perhaps, I may be pardoned if, in attempting in this meagre record of your literary achievements, to describe your relations to that paper, I should venture to call it an affiliated proprietorship. And now, with the laurels of the Education Commission yet green on your brow, with your character as a legislator who can speak well, still in its newest gloss, you are to go to England to give evidence on so recondite a subject as the use of Indian railways in famines. Your qualification for this new task would seem to be a pamphlet on Indian famines, written some eight years ago, or your other pamphlet published about the same time on Indian Mahommedans.

And you are, too, the official who, from stress of moral conviction, was 'constrained' to vote for the

Ilbert Bill. Of course, my dear Doctor, you were 'constrained' to vote for a measure, about the consequences of which you did not care the thousandth part of a fractional straw, but which was fathered by the maker of Members of Council, Legislators, Secretaries, and Chief Commissioners. You should have voted for the Bill and said nothing. You had a right to vote as you pleased; and if you had been content to give a silent vote, your motives, impressions, and convictions in connection with the matter would have passed without notice or examination. In an evil hour for yourself you attempted to pose as the polemical and literary champion of the measure. Eheu! Doctor Hunter! Why could you not refrain from pretending an independence, belief in which is necessarily impossible. The man who tried to convince the English public through the medium of the *Times* that statutory Civilians deserved as a class to be ranked with their covenanted brethren, and entrusted with the same powers and privileges; who discovered that native Civilians are more English than the English, and are worthy of an Englishman's trust because they are prejudiced in his favour,—why, that man was yourself, Dr. Hunter; and after that the less said about your moral 'constraints' the better.

To sum up. Against your life as a public man is writ one little word that makes a jest of fame—that stultifies the mightest wit—that dims the lustre of the

brightest name—humbug. You can scarcely be called in any sense of the word a hypocrite, because hypocrisy implies the concealment or suppression of one set of impressions or convictions in favour of others ostensibly entertained, and you have no impressions or convictions to conceal. What is the result? You have reduced yourself in general public estimation to that least enviable of all positions, where your praise is censure, and your censure, praise; your alliance, a peril; your opposition, a gain. All this poor Croft has realised to his cost. If such things could suffocate, he ought to be dead,—killed by an overdose of melted butter. It is not yet too late to retrace your steps. We always may be what we might have been. I charge thee, then, dear Doctor Hunter, to fling away official ambition. By that sin fell Temple, Campbell, and the rest. Fling away pretentious and pretended statesmanship, philology, history, and become again the most graceful, and suggestive, and sentimental essayist of our time.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

VIII.

TO THE RIGHT HON. MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE GRANT-DUFF.

SIR,—I feel compelled to ask myself—can I do you justice? *Nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum.* If you had never come to India, I should never have had to deal with so much greatness, or rather, perhaps, with so pronounced a consciousness of greatness. Of all the English politicians who have lent themselves to the service of India, you, perhaps, are the best illustration of the Horatian saying, *Cœlum non animum mutant.* What you were amongst essayists in London, what you were at Elgin, what you were in the House of Commons, that, and that only, are you in your Governorship, whether you seek the retirement of Guindy, the imitated publicity of Ootacamund, or the condescensions of life on tour. What you may yet be as a Governor, it is not easy to say; but although you have served more than half the period within which a middle-aged English official may achieve an Indian reputation, you have not yet stooped to the level of your duties. No Governor has ever been so little Madrassi in his ways or his surroundings,—no Indian ruler has ever so completely succeeded in disseminating the idea that he considers

his satrapy a bore and a disappointment. Where the ambition is, there will the heart be likewise, and your ambition, sir, is still at Westminster. As a young man, you added the polish of Balliol to the solid grounding of Edinburgh, and achieved what in an older generation would have been described as a very pretty reputation for scholarship. Your industry and your acquirements led men to hope much from the promise of your youth when you gave up a formal connection with law for the serious career of a politician. A connection of more than twenty-three years with the Elgin burghs, like the connection of Lord Palmerston with Tiverton, showed that you preferred a safe rather than an *exigeant* constituency. It is to the honour of the Elgin electors that they were faithful to their choice, and it is not the least of your merits that you shed upon them the fullness of a considerable, if not a first class, reputation. When a young man of fair parts and good attainments enters public life in England, he has only to prove himself painstaking, industrious, and pushing, to receive an early reward in the shape of such promotion to office as singles him out from his fellows. It is, in fact, one of the best phases of English political life that each great party in the State takes pains to train its more promising young men to office, and to provide itself with a succession of skilled administrators. That the record of your rule in Madras should be the story of

a failure is the more remarkable from the fact that, for more than five years you were considered an exceptionally good, even if an exceptionally unpleasant, Under-Secretary for India. In the Liberal interregnum caused by the Beaconsfieldian usurpation, you were a ready aid to your chiefs, and were always at hand to support their attacks upon their enemies by some inconvenient historical reference, or some Cassandra-like bewailments over Conservative backslidings. The *rôle* was not, perhaps, such as would have contented the highest ambition, but it was useful; and when after much good service, the Liberals returned to power in 1880, a Privy Councillorship and the post of Under-Secretary for the Colonies were everywhere considered but a poor reward for the ready speaker, the trusted essayist, and the thorough partisan you had shown yourself. It is, perhaps, as unfortunate for yourself as for Madras that you allowed yourself to be persuaded after little more than a year's experience of Colonial business to be transplanted to the uncongenial soil of a minor Indian Presidency. That it is possible for a middle-aged Parliamentary man to understand India and its people, and to make himself beloved and respected, the short but lamented career of your predecessor is a sufficient proof. The difference is not the fault of circumstances or of the place, but of the man. Mr. Adam was successful because he adopted Madras. You, sir, are unsuccessful

because Madras, native as well as European, feels that your world is not its world, and that though you may be using your unexampled opportunities of observation and knowledge for the purpose of writing a book, you are not the man who rules. One special feature in your political career at Home will go a long way to support the theory of the heredity of gifts. It was your business and your pleasure once a year to give an account of your membership to your lieges of Elgin. On such occasions you were wont to favour the English public with an elaborate and useful summary of the events of a session. This was, perhaps, what might have been expected from the son of the historian of the Mahrattas; but you, sir, carried the custom too far. From being didactic at Elgin, you became didactic in the Commons, didactic in your writings, didactic in society, and in fact you seem to have wrecked yourself and your hopes upon a passion for being didactic. The pearls which a wide reading, a fine observation, and some power of imagination enabled you to manufacture were, I regret to say, unappreciated by an audience who preferred oratorical fireworks to gems of thought, and sensational outbursts to utterances more and more laboured, and more and more affecting to approach the borders of political prophesy. And yet your first Budget speech, your first presentment of the finances of India to a wearied and listless House, was a model

of what such communications should be; but that was all. You did not bring to the discussion of Indian questions the wide and open mind, the generous and sympathetic thought, of the statesman. You were in all things the trusted official, the valuable Under-Secretary, and that only. To illustrate the spirit in which you approached Indian matters,—a spirit chiefly moved by that undercurrent of contempt or scorn which has divorced you from the good opinion of your subjects in the South,—I would quote here your remarks upon the position of the Nawab Nazim of Bengal. On 19th December, 1838, the Nawab Nazim was proclaimed at Fort William under a salute of nineteen guns. On July 4th, 1871, you, sir, described this unfortunate Prince to the House of Commons in these terms:—
"The Nawab Nazim of Bengal is no Prince, his father was no Prince, his grandfather was no Prince. None of his predecessors have been Indian Princes. Who or what is he, then? He is the eighth successor of Meer Jaffier in the favour of the British Government; the eighth successor of Meer Jaffier, who was himself no Prince, but an officer of an officer of the King of Delhi, an officer in the service of Seraj-ud-Dowlah, who was the Governor of Bengal under the Mogul Empire when we won our first great success in North-Eastern India!" The unfairness, the glib facility of mis-statement, the unscrupulous disregard of everything but the making

of an oratorical point there displayed, accounts for much of your failure in public life at Home and for your collapse in Madras. Yet after all you are not a ruler, but a reviewer. You have too the faults of your class, a vanity of learning, and a belief that he who can criticise can create. You are not a statesman, though you are one of the most notable men of the day at making a statement. If you could be brought to appreciate the difference here implied, it is possible that the world might yet have more cause to praise you than you have hitherto afforded it. But to contrast statesmanship and statementship—and in the latter art you are admittedly *facile princeps*,— I have only to compare your admirable reviews of the year's work at Madras with your conduct of the Salem case. The statement was so good as to have been worthy of the columns of the *Madras Mail;* whilst your imprudent and careless views of the very serious affair at Salem leave you to the condemnation of those who declare you constitutionally unfit to rule, or to the sneers of those who aver that you have administrative capacity, but prefer to allow yourself to be led by a Huddlestone, or a Carmichael, or other official nurse, the Fates and the service may provide for you. But though, as in the Salem case, and the case of Colonel Drever, you have provoked anger as well as contempt, you have not hesitated to adopt and support the vagaries and theories of Lord Ripon. For you the Ilbert Bill was a

marvel of justice, the Local Self-Government scheme a marvel of wisdom. There is no courage like the courage of ignorance, unless it is the courage of the theorist; and you and your chief managed to combine both kinds in your endeavours to legislate for an India which you had evolved out of your inner consciousness. Much is forgiven to earnestness when this is united to a practical object; but when earnestness and trained talent of a kind are united to bolster up mere theory, the public lose patience in considering how great are the interests which may be imperilled. It is unfortunate for you, sir, that the only earnestness you have yet displayed should have provoked suspicion of your aims, rather than confidence in your ability and willingness to master the problems with which you are called upon to deal. That you are unpopular with the *Hinau* equally with the *Madras Mail* is a rare fact, but true, because of its rarity. You ought not to be unpopular considering all things, and considering that you are as great a tourist as Sir Richard Temple himself. In his case the object was work; in your case the object no man has yet ventured to discover. Your tours have made you the *bête noir* of the service, and, instead of bringing the service nearer to you, have had a distinctly contrary effect. Men whose daily life accustoms them to use wide power and substantial authority, for whom life has an intensely practical side, cannot appreciate

a distant imitation of royalty, or a *dilettante* dealing with administrative questions, where every claim on the chief is presumed to have been satisfied when all arrears have been worked off. There is a speed which is worse than delay, and which takes no thought of the wise advice to rulers—*sat cito si sat bene.* In all things you have been unfortunate since you attempted to be a Governor. You have provoked inextinguishable laughter by officialising your wife, and by your own curious and curiously little way of mixing up the Privy Councillor with the Governor. Men smile as they puzzle themselves between your Right Honourable Excellency and "Your Excellency the Right Honourable." This is to frivol,—a pastime forbidden to such mightinesses as the chiefs of Indian Presidencies. Then, what was it but a frivolous spirit which induced His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor of Madras and its dependencies to revenge upon a newspaper the crime of free-speech by its ostracism from State advertisements. There is a hasting to be despotic in such a procedure, characteristic I fear of those members of the school of liberals who now exercise authority in India, and amongst whom you are regarded as a bright and shining example. The causes of an official's unpopularity are less in his surroundings than in himself. You who ought to be the head of Madras society prefer to be the mere centre of a coterie, small but select, and

masters alike of the art of conversation and of the science of *khooshamat*. Can you wonder that society resents your defection, and rewards your abdication of your duties by an unpopularity phenomenal in its universality and thoroughness. Perhaps, it may be my exceptional good fortune to persuade you that you are the most unpopular ruler ever known south of the Godavery, and to convince you that you cannot win society by shrinking from its observances, or achieve a reputation as a statesman by laborious devotion to the duties of a chief clerk. You may have heard why Themistocles failed—*huic maxime putamus malo fuisse, nimiam opinionem ingenii*—May not, sir, the same be said of the man whose worst service to England was his acceptance of high office in India.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

IX.

TO ALLAN O. HUME, ESQ., C.B.

DEAR SIR,—One of the infirmities of the popular British mind is its tendency to sum up complexities of conduct and character, which it cannot comprehend in the one majestic word—gammon! Much of the fine scorn of public opinion expressed by supersubtle people is a revolt against this crushing verdict, embittered by an uneasy consciousness of its justice. In your case, my

dear Mr. Hume, this is a hard saying; for an eager temperament has led you to throw your pearls before swine, and to deliver yourself into the hands of the Philistines. I do not expect—nor scarcely, indeed, do I wish—to show cause against the substantial justice of the sentence passed upon you. But when I have listened to a group of Behar planters, or of Calcutta merchants, discussing your absurd letters on Native Volunteers, I have regretted that their contemptuous conclusions were tempered by none of the allowances and excuses which those who know you best are ready to make. There is something touching in the respect shown in the East, even by ignorant villagers, for those who are afflicted by a solution of continuity in their mental texture. The British House of Commons has occasionally shown a similar consideration for its eccentrics; but the public life of Anglo-India sorely lacks tolerance and knowledge, and you have been at times assailed with a force and venom that you have by no means deserved.

I should like to indicate here one or two of the points wherein you have been imperfectly appreciated. But in setting out, I must confess, the story I should like to tell my public would be not yours but that of your house. I know of no thread of family history on which a more instructive record of the intertwined progress of England and India could be strung. The success of

Mr. Justin McCarthy's clever sketch has shown that the public is as willing to hear of the England of yesteryear as of that of Freeman, Froude, or Macaulay. A modern Defoe could make a fascinating narrative of the life of the young Scotch doctor, whose widowed mother kept a shop, and whose scarce-remembered father was the canny skipper of a Montrose coasting brig. He would reconstruct for us the fine Indiaman in which the young adventurer shipped as Surgeon, and would tell us of his employment ashore in the land where the pagoda tree flourished, of his study of the languages spoken by the Moors and Gentoos, and of his still keener studies of men, money, and affairs. We should learn his adventures as Interpreter, Paymaster, and Postmaster, to Lord Lake's forces in the Mahratta country; and, while watching a passage in the building of the Empire, we should be compelled to admire the clear-headedness and tenacity of purpose, which enabled Joseph Hume to return to England, still a young man, with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds. His subsequent travels were considerable for a Briton of his day. But his long career in Parliament; his acuteness in ferreting out that now-forgotten Orange plot, which would have given us the Duke of Cumberland as King of Merrie England, instead of Her Gracious Majesty; his efforts to keep the debtor out of prison, the soldier's back unscarred by the lash, and the public purse from

fraudulent fingers, would involve a history of the House of Commons during a most eventful, because a most progressive, time. A careful examination of the current literature of the day would show how his name slowly grew into a proverb, while his austere passion for economy and his love of reports and enquiries made him a terror to not a few amateur politicians.

If you would be good enough to tell this story, continuing it from Montrose to the Mahratta country, to the Mutiny, even down to the Municipality, of which you are, at once, the plague and the pride, we should have a more lively picture of the growth of our wonderful Empire during two short lives than is presented in the slap-dash sketches of Sir Richard Temple, or the clever generalisations of Doctor W. W. Hunter, C.S.I., C.I.E. But though you have the right, both inherited and fairly earned, to take up this attractive task, you prefer to write to the *Saturday Review's* waste-paper basket about that "dear old lady" Madame Blavatsky the apex of an inverted pyramid of blarney, which your friend, Mr. Sinnett, fondly and with an amusing ambition, hopes to raise sky high.

And here I have almost unwittingly laid my hand on the key-note of your character,—an amiable wilfulness and perversity organic in your nature. I admit at the same time the purely Philistine nature of the view that looks on a patronage of theosophy as an evidence of

mental perversity. For this is the view of the stupid world which is inclined to say of the leaders of this creed, as the angry commanding officer said at the close of a bungled parade—"There *may* be a lot of genius in this regiment, but there's blank little commonsense." It would, perhaps, be dangerous to hint that your eccentricity is sometimes not wholly the result of impulse but *voulu*, or calculated, for that would be "imputing motives," and you might threaten to punch my head,—an honour which in an amusing rigmarole of a letter you seriously declared had been earned by one of your dear friends of the native Press. Alas! Sir, this sweet and simple method is no longer possible to journalism. The age is squeamish; it even denies to outraged patience the inexpressible relief of the simplest Anglo-Saxon. We now reply in various ways to the writer with whom we happen to disagree. If we belong to the race of writers who cannot write, we lay about us with a clumsy literary bludgeon, and call him such names as 'dullard' in a severely superior and demi-official manner, but generally we follow honest Dogberry's advice—"Take no note of him, but let him go, and thank God we are rid of a knave."

In spite, however, of Mr. Matthew Arnold's complaints of the irregularity, want of measure, and sanity in modern English thought, it will be hard to persuade most of my readers that eccentricity *per se* is a serious

fault. The very rigidity and formalism of our official system provokes some men of brains and insight into such freaks of convulsive cleverness as those by which your career has been distinguished. And many of your caprices have been full of sense, while your devotion to one positive branch of scientific enquiry has earned for you a reputation beyond these shores. A friend of mine who had been looking over your museum irritated me greatly by the remark that you were only a cabinet ornithologist. Our little Anglo-Indian public is nothing if not critical, and I fancy this disparaging and not very intelligible statement has found currency. Nothing could be further from the truth, for you have a wonderfully wide and accurate knowledge of the life-history of the beautiful creatures you have collected so assiduously. So, although one may smile at your vegetarianism, at the fussy little Municipality over which you are the Tyrannos, at your theosophy, at your zeal for the coming of the kingdom of the Baboo, and such like, we cannot but regret to hear that the British Museum, which has always been somewhat of a close borough, has not appreciated your unrivalled collection at its true value.

Your official career, especially at Etawah, where you are still freshly remembered, has given rise to many good stories, which, like snowballs, have grown larger as they have been rolled along. They all point to an ardent

temperament, a poetical gift of statement, and a vivacious personal influence exercised, on the whole, for good. There is a quaint record of your conduct during the Mutiny in the pages of Mr. Trevelyan's still amusing and suggestive "Competition-wallah":—"Mr. Hume, of Etawah, who was blamed by many for excess of leniency, but who so bore himself that no one could blame him for want of courage, distinguished himself by keeping down the number of executions in his district to seven, and by granting the culprits a fair trial. These he treated with fatherly tenderness, for he invented a patent drop for their benefit; so that men prayed—first, that they might be tried by Mr. Hume, and next, that, if found guilty, they might be hanged by him!" We have recently been hearing dreadful things of the barbarity of English executions; and since you wish to be useful in your generation, you ought to communicate the secret of this merciful drop to the Home Secretary.

Some of the parts of your official career were, however, scarcely so successful as the Etawah period. The egotism and self-assertion that give weight and substance to a District Officer's personality stand in the way of an official whose administrative work is largely concerned with his equals and superiors. So that it is not surprising if the chief issue of your tenure of office as Secretary to the Government of India in the Etcetera Department was a pamphlet setting forth what ought

to be done. Indeed, the whole record of your service under Government is of much less interest to the public than the diversions of your freedom. You have been good enough to invite attention to these diversions pretty freely, and it must be admitted they are instructive. It is but seldom we have the privilege of seeing a Civilian out of the coach he erst drove so merrily, taking his chance on the highway with tradesmen, adventurers, editors, planters, and other unspeakable outsiders. And as we read we learn with a sort of pleasant thrill that what was lawful for Mr. Hume to do at Etawah is unlawful for any one else, that civil officers are despotic, and that sacred rights are tyrannously trampled under foot by a bloated bureaucracy. All this is vastly edifying, and it is still more delightful to hear that you have successfully fought for the liberty in fact, which has been promised in word, by a theorist in self-government, who has scarcely realised all his words meant.

And yet, sir, this stupid public, for whose entertainment you have done so much, and in whose interests you labour so strenuously, declines to take you seriously. It has an uneasy apprehension that you may suddenly heave the anchor of your convictions, and veer viciously round upon it. The poor Baboo naturally mistrusts a benevolent regenerator, who praises him one day, and on the next assures him he ought to have his

head punched; while cynical men of the world of your own race, as they read each eager utterance you send to the public prints, have but one word of dissent and comment, and that is—Gammon!

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

X.

TO J. B. RICHEY, ESQ., C.S.I., BO. C.S., *Chief Secy. to the Bombay Govt.*

SIR,—So far Sadyk Dost's task has been a comparatively easy one. It is a fact that few will care to deny, deplore it though we may, that, where shortcomings and frailties are to be exposed, the writer's business can readily commend itself to the public mind. Our fellow-men are always willing to be amused and gratified at an exposure of great men's weaknesses. They are not always so tolerant of a panegyric; and yet, sir, those who know you best would, I feel sure, in spite of your own certain modest disclaimer, consider it an unpardonable oversight, were your name omitted from my portrait gallery of eminent Anglo-Indians. It is not in the expectation of gratifying you that I address to you the following remarks. It is rather due to my sense of the benefit others may derive from a contemplation of your blameless character, and it is, I

confess, in the nature of a relief to my pen, too often charged with what the world may consider the bitter gall of deserved censure, that I allow myself to apply it in this letter addressing a gentleman, against whom I shall not have to bring the shadow of a shade of recrimination. Those who will read this letter may accept this candid exordium in the most perfect good faith; and should they feel themselves inadequate to the task of perusing an honest tribute of sincere praise to an honest and sincere man, I would recommend them to pause here, that their appetite for piquant reproof may not be grievously disappointed.

You will permit me to say, sir, that, amongst the members of your own Service, there is no one who commands such wide respect and admiration as yourself. I question whether a single member of the Bombay Civil Service could be found to speak a word in detraction of your personal charm and the eminence of your mental qualifications. And when we reflect upon the general tone pervading Anglo-Indian life—the constant jealousies that embitter the careers of so many admirable gentlemen—the feverish emulation which scarcely allows us to appreciate with unbiased judgment the good fortunes of our more successful competitors,—when we reflect upon these and many kindred influences, it will be readily understood that what I have just been able to say truthfully of you constitutes in itself a most

singular and pre-eminent panegyric. That throughout your long and meritorious service you have made and retained so many staunch friends bespeaks some part of your admirable character; that you have in addition to this silenced the thousand carping tongues that are only too ready to bray at the heels of finer natures concludes the proof of your particular claim to be recognised as an eminent figure in our Anglo-Indian State. I am well aware that many believe it to be an essential of a great and original mind that it should attract at least as much enmity and opposition as regard and esteem. I do not hold with that doctrine, at least in so much as to believe it universal. For you, sir, are a shining example to the contrary; and whether or not this is merely the exception that proves the rule, I care not here to enquire.

Many years ago, when your distinguished services had attracted the recognition and gratitude of Government, and won for you the coveted distinction of a C. S. I., you were looked upon by all as a rising man who could scarcely fail to mount by rapid strides the loftier degrees of Fame's ladder. It was a just and proper expectation. Your abilities had already shone conspicuously comparatively junior as you then were, you had received one of the highest marks of the Queen's approbation, and all men hoped that you had taken the fateful tide in the affairs of men at the full flood,

and would shortly appear in those larger spheres which you were so eminently calculated to adorn. But public expectation in this instance was falsified. For reasons which, perhaps, no one has ever cared to investigate, and which certainly do not appear ever to have been explained, you were allowed to drift on one side, and for many years in the fruitful obscurity of district life, your large talents were employed upon the general routine work of a collector's office.

The jobbery of a clique—and in India official cliques dim the fame of the Services—was supposed to be in large measure responsible for this unfortunate result. Although the unanimous voice of your Presidency would have nominated you for the post of Chief Secretary long ago the wires were pulled too skilfully. It was with little short of passionate disappointment that men learnt of the appointment of a man much your junior, incomparably your inferior in experience, and almost as widely unpopular as you were the reverse, to act as Chief Secretary, while you were allowed to continue in obscurity. It was generally feared that this gentleman would succeed after all in retaining that lofty position should it fall finally vacant, and the sympathy which was felt and expressed for the injustice done to you, was only equalled by the confident realisation of how much the Government was likely to lose by neglecting your superior claims.

As a Collector, you were a model of what such an officer should be. Quick, alert, and accurate, business was rapidly and satisfactorily disposed of; your assistants believed in you thoroughly, and you conciliated at once their sincerest respect and warmest attachment by your unvarying courtesy, help, and consideration. Beyond this you were a thorough sportsman, and combined the most happy despatch in State affairs with a keen zest for outdoor amusements. A stay in your camp was to the young civilian, if I may be permitted to use that splendid phrase in a slightly different sense, a liberal education. Men enjoyed the brilliancy of your wit, the heartiness of your hospitality, the generous largeness of your heart, and left you feeling the better for having known you. You were, sir, in every point and detail of your life *homo factus ad unguem*. At last, when nearly wearied out under a painful sense of neglect and misappreciated merit, you were actually contemplating retirement from this ungrateful country, the Government awoke to a lively sense of the irreparable loss the Service would sustain in you. Providentially Mr. Gonne elected to take leave, and had you not then been appointed to the post you are now filling, the whole Bombay Civil Service would have felt itself most seriously aggrieved. It was impossible any longer to neglect your merits or deny your claims. Sir James Fergusson has, at any rate, earned a large share of

gratitude in treating you at last as Sir Richard Temple ought to have treated you five years ago. Your upward career, sir, though far too long delayed, is, let me venture to hope and predict, now finally assured. There is no single gentleman at Bombay more singularly qualified than yourself for a seat at the Executive Council; and when that happy consummation is reached, I think, sir, it will be a source of lively gratification to you to feel that in your good fortune you will have the unqualified congratulations and good wishes of all who have ever known you.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XI.

TO THE HON'BLE AUGUSTUS RIVERS THOMPSON, C.S.I., C.I.E.,

Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

SIR,—It has been finely said that "to know the pains of power we must go to those who have it." It is little more than two years since it fell to your lot to succeed a ruler who to much of the Tudor nature added much of the Tudor temper. And yet how much has been crowded into these two years? How distant appears that sunny morning when all Calcutta united to remember only Sir Ashley Eden's success, and to forget his

faults! In the interval the pains of power have revealed themselves to you, as crisis after crisis developed itself, and public opinion drifted further and further from the safe paths of unanimity and forbearance it had been content to tread with your predecessor. That, tried so fiercely, you should have come out of the trial with a higher reputation is not a surprise to those who know you. Goethe says that—"No one who cannot master himself is worthy to rule, and only he can rule." It was a happy fortune for India, that, in the province most affected by measures of doubtful expediency, forced upon the public with an unwise indifference to public feeling, the centre of authority should rest with a man whose serene steadfastness, and whose lofty devotion to duty, were always an unconscious but powerful recommendation to moderation. It was not, sir, that you were thought of as a partisan. Your strength was that you were confessedly so far above taking sides, so far removed from the weakness of a mere controversialist, that your words had the weight of a judgment, and both parties gave you unreservedly their confidence. This was a tribute of which any statesman might be proud; won by a man whose whole official training was directed to the inculcation of the virtue of obedience, it revealed a nature little dreamed of—brave, lofty, unselfish, and a mind capable of rising with power and dignity to the height of whatever duty and responsi-

bility it might be called upon to meet. It is the peculiar inheritance of England that fortune cannot use her so despitefully, but that an Englishman shall be found whose mind and energies expand to the full measure of his country's needs, until with tranquil strength he turns away the threatened evil. In India this has become almost a part of the popular belief, and men already perceive how greatly the State is indebted to the calm wisdom, the reserved force, the even and habitual courage with which you held steadily and firmly the reins of the province committed to your rule. The true manhood is that which is always growing to something higher, to which experience is as the welcome rain to a plant, and success as the needed sunshine. It has been your good fortune to be employed in many parts of Bengal, and to have filled, always with increasing credit, the offices of Magistrate-Collector, Judge, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, and Secretary to the Government of Bengal. You have also held the chief authority in British Burmah, and have lent the weight of your character and experience to the Council of the Viceroy. I say weight, because I know of no word which more fitly expresses the general opinion of your value as an official. All through life the reputation 'Bill' Thompson gained at Eton—where he played in the Eleven against Harrow, and rowed in the Eight against Westminster—for thorough-

ness and soundness, has been borne by the Civilian who made it his aim, from the day he was posted to Bancoorah to the day when he fought against sickness to discharge in the Council a great duty at a great crisis, to consider no sacrifice of self too great, so that India might be benefited. Your name, sir, is a tower of strength to this day in many districts. Although it is thirty years since you left Bancoorah, men yet speak of the way in which you there interested yourself in education, and lost no opportunity of entering into intimate relations with the people. The story is the same in kind, though wider in scope and richer in detail, of your career as Judge of Nuddea. You had the good sense and the good fortune to avoid the weak man's blunder of wide and large promises. You ever sought to awaken a feeling of self-help and self-reliance, and thus you have gathered about you in Calcutta, as in the mofussil, the fame of a man who has many friends and no enemies. And yet you have never pandered to the vanity of the natives; you have been their friend as you saw their needs, not their friend as they expressed their wishes. You have, in fact, been the friend of the natives not only because you liked the people and understood them in a way given to few men in your service, but because it was your duty to lead as well as rule them, to labour to lift them to a higher stage of civilisation, as well as to see that they obeyed the law and faithfully

paid their 'revenue. And so your name became loved and reverenced, until we have seen the spectacle of whole communities enthusiastic to do you honour, in spite of the arts of a handful of agitators whose game you have ruined, and in spite of the venomous diatribes of native journalists who understand and dislike, who fear and shrink from, your thoroughly English tone of mind and commonsense. But, sir, when a false religious outcry was raised—when it was attempted to excite native passions by preaching from the text that the highest Court in the land was used as an instrument to dishonour Hindooism—the seeds you had sown from the day you became an Assistant Magistrate came back to you in a harvest of personal influence with all that is best and noblest amongst the natives, such as enabled you to stem the tide of sedition without unveiling your authority, and without lending to the agitation that public martyrdom on which its authors had reckoned as a main factor of success. By no other man in your service could so great, so tranquil, and so characteristic a victory have been achieved. Amongst your own countrymen, you have stood high since the day when one of the ablest men, who ever rose to distinction in India—Mr. Harrington—publicly acknowledged his indebtedness to you in connection with that Code of Civil Procedure which must be ever honourably associated with his name. Then, again,

you won golden opinions in Burmah by your power of adopting the requirements of those about you. No man ever lent himself so little to show—no man ever borrowed so little of pretence, even that easiest and most deceptive pretence, a blind of earnestness. Quiet, courteous, reserved, somewhat it may be of a puzzle to those with whom you are brought in contact, men are yet always ready to give you their confidence and ready to believe you will do what is right and follow what is best. When it was known that you had, as Member of the Government of India, recorded your opinion against the impolicy of sacrificing the results of the Afghan war, the public were not slow to put your protest down, not to independence, not to a mere obedience to what you thought your duty, but to a statesmanship, the result of larger and wider responsibilities, and to a breadth of vision which had come to you with a loftier position. They recognised the development of a nature capable under favourable circumstances of greatness; and from that time they have never ceased to be proud of the confidence with which they have never ceased to surround you. In all true confidence there is an element of content as well as trust. Your countrymen are content with you, even when they disagree with you, because they know they can trust your unrivalled knowledge of the country and your rare judgment and rarer commonsense. In the

stand you took upon the Ilbert Bill, the happy balance of your faculties made you always an example of moderation. Popularity, on some natures, is as exciting as alcohol on others. It seizes upon the strongest, and warps alike their vision and their purposes. In your case the popularity was given with a sort of fierceness and pride, because it was withheld from one who might have gathered it without pains and as a tribute to his unique and most trying position. Popularity came to you as it comes to few. It came, not only as a recognition of duty done, but as a temptation to exalt your office. Yet, now that the fire has burnt low, and passions are cooled, all men understand and venerate the self-restraint which made you, without denying your favour with the public, loyally refuse to allow yourself to be made in any way the cause of inflicting a new slight or it may be a new pain, upon a Viceroy who, if he be a man, must bitterly regret the blunder into which he was precipitated by bad fortune or bad advice. I have heard it said that you can be guilty of nepotism, yet the only foundation for the charge is an inheritance of favouritism which came to you from Sir Ashley Eden,—a man to whom favouritism was a means of administration. It may not, perhaps, be generally known that, as the head of an old Indian family, there has never been a Lieutenant-Governor who could find so many relations to provide for and such excuses for

using his patronage in a way which would have recommended itself to very many who have risen high in the Indian Service. That you cannot be charged with looking after your own is, I take it, a perfect disproof of any accusation of nepotism. And yet although the Service grumbles at the despotism of the Secretariat, it is felt from Writers' Buildings to the most distant Assistantship that you can find occasion to put aside the inevitable cigarette, and to be more of the Governor than Bengal has yet known. In your private life, you have had the inestimable advantage of marrying young and marrying happily. If you appear, as a reserved English gentleman trained to hard work, and to set a high value on time, you also appear as a Christian gentleman—a man whose faith is a part of his daily life, and the sweetest and strongest strand in his character. It has been your good fortune to render India the highest service by the confidence you have won and by the influence of your high character. You are trusted because men judge you are capable of even more splendid service to England than it has yet fallen to your lot to render, and when they speak of you, they remember how gallantly you bore up against a dangerous sickness rather than be absent from what you considered your post. Your virtues are English through and through, and your faults, an apparent coldness, an apparent pride, an apparent indifference to small things, are English too.

Coming after a man who was nothing if not strong,—you have not failed in strength; coming after a man whose fame as an administrator was recognised in every corner of India, you are yet a successful ruler. You will leave behind you, like him, a great name; and unlike him more than a name,—a character and an example which every English heart will cherish as belonging to the Bayard of the Civil Service.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XII.

TO SIR FREDERICK SLEIGH ROBERTS, BART., G.C.B., C.I.E., V.C., R.E.,

Commander-in-Chief, Madras.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—When I try to think of you as a hero, I am somewhat put about, for I remember the lines—

> He's of stature somewhat low,
> Your hero should be always tall you know.

Yet Wellington and Napoleon were not of the sons of the Anakim; so that if I find you otherwise great, I may even perchance admit you to the sacred and noble list of English heroes. For if with Carlyle I have not the love of greatness, I certainly claim with him the love of the love of greatness. You, sir, come

of a martial family and can claim an hereditary right to warlike feats. That personally, in spite of what most men would consider delicate health and a physique far from robust, you have mightily upborne the martial fame of your family, the simple yet glorious bronze cross you won so gallantly at Khodagunge will tell every soldier. You love danger as some men love fox-hunting, or as the Viking spirit breaks peacefully out in some other men in yachting. It is no wonder, therefore, that the son of a brave and distinguished soldier should, when his opportunity came, display on all occasions a distinct and gallant love of peril, such as should give him a special place even amongst the many brave hearts who stepped into reputation as soon as the Mutiny gave occasion for dauntlessness. Your career at Delhi, in the Doab, and in Oudh was as brilliant and as fortunate as the most ambitious young soldier could desire. Your connection with the Staff caused you to make powerful friends, and secured to you rapid promotion and continuous employment on the Staff or at Head-Quarters. I am not satisfied this is the best training for a great soldier. A man thus learns tact, learns management, learns the best theory of his profession, and he also too often, as in your own case, learns a certain self-consciousness of greatness, which is one of the surest proofs that he is not really great. In your profession, your Excellency, it is sometimes the

worst fortune that can befal an officer to be too lucky. You are said to be one of England's two only Generals. Your rival was your comrade and fellow on the Staff in Oudh in 1857-58—the then Captain, but now Baron, Wolseley? Indeed, I have some sort of recollection that Captain Wolseley relieved Lieutenant Roberts when, in 1858, the latter had, after a year's campaigning, to proceed home on leave. The then comrades could scarcely have guessed that twenty years later they would divide the military admiration,—and ought I to say?—the military allegiance of their countrymen. Both have been lucky; both are fighting men, audacious, gallant, gay, foremost in every fray, and possessing the campaigning temper which enjoys hardships, and finds nothing so depressing as inactivity. But, are they Generals of the first rank? I do not think so. I pass over Lord Wolseley's career, and confine myself to the most brilliantly successful service of this generation of Anglo-Indians—the service of Sir Frederick Roberts. It was your luck, General, to win the favour of the great. You were a favourite with men so dissimilar in character and tastes as Lords Canning and Lytton. The effect of this on your fortunes was, that you never ceased to belong to the desk when you ought to have belonged to the Army. Study makes a fine soldier, but practice alone makes him great. No one can find fault with the theoretical knowledge of those graduates of West Point who led the armies of

the North and South ; but if they had had a larger practice of war, who can believe that that mighty contest would have been so long indecisive? All through your work as a General there runs a certain feebleness, a weakness of grip in seizing upon the strong points of a situation, and a want of real greatness, only to be accounted for on the supposition that you have not yet learnt the easy management of masses of men. You are a diligent and unceasing student of war and things soldierly. If to your book-knowledge you could add the ready, cautious, and yet effective disposition of troops in the field, I am fain to believe that you might yet be what England is now inclined to believe. The easy handling of masses of troops may at times almost make up for a want of true generalship, as witness Marshal Niel's work at Magenta, and MacMahon's defence at Woerth. If to these displays of tactics I wish to contrast anything done by yourself, I should point to the loose way Charasia was fought, to the way your plans were disjointed at Candahar, and to the wondrous spectacle recently presented at the Bangalore manœuvres when the wrong side won in the wrong way, and when the general order of your Excellency, as Umpire-in-Chief, only made controversy the more certain and the more hopeless. This reminds me that these Bangalore manœuvres gave the world an excellent photograph of yourself as a man and a general. The instructions

for the *tamasha* were drawn up like your route-book for Bengal, with a sort of *sub janta* devotion to detail. Nothing is so changeable as war—nothing depends so much upon locality for the daily character it may assume; and yet the Bangalore instructions were designed, not only for your own army, but for all India. Then, you could not trust your commanders all in all, or not at all; you had to interfere with that pleasant indecisiveness which you only lose under extreme pressure; and as at the Peiwar Kotal blame passed you by to fall on Cobbe and Thelwall, and as at Cabul, Massy was the scapegoat, so at Bangalore poor Sir Charles Keyes found himself, without knowing why, bearing the blame of an affair that would not end brilliantly. Before I venture to glance at your soldiership, I am bound to say that, in spite of your known tact and pleasant ways, you are not a military or a social success at Madras. The brave hand ought to be an open hand, and it is not fair to yourself or the army that such a reproach should be even so much as hinted. Then you affect a greatness which suggests a certain amount of independence of the head of the Government. In fact, the greatness of the individual General overshadows the official Commander-in-Chief and the army he is supposed to prepare for victory. You, General, are a pleasant listener to grievances which Colonel Pretyman most carefully snubs or snuffs out;

and you are not capable apparently of restraining the vagaries of the Adjutant-General's Department. Kissing goes by favour, except when it is convenient to fall back upon promotion or employment regimentally, and then no thought is taken that, with a small army and a big senior Staff Corps, regimental promotion is wilful and flagrant jobbery. It is true you have succeeded in carrying out Neville Chamberlain's idea of re-uniforming the Madras sepoy; but I am doubtful if I can say you are popular within or without your army, or if any one would regret your departure from Madras. You offend your officers by the way you let Colonels Clerk and Faunce have their own way, and you have more than offended the rest of the community by the way you seek your own convenience in the matter of removing head-quarter offices away from the head-quarters of the Presidency. No, Sir Frederick; I fear, I must say, you are very far, indeed, from being a success at Madras. But there is another matter in which you have attempted to shine and have failed. The Simla Army Commission is a monument of misapplied talent, a wicked waste of cleverness, a bolstering up in a very able and self-sufficient way of certain foregone conclusions. It is an attempt to apply to India the German territorial corps system, mixed up in a ludicrous way with the English system of battalions and reliefs. A great General would never seek to apply

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the territorial system to India, an Empire where the backbone of the army is an uncertain contingent of foreign troops, and where every fraction of the force is mercenary out of its own province. The work is an amazing sample of theoretical knowledge and office efficiency; but it is not Generalship, and is not a contribution to the science of waging war. All that your contribution to this monument of Indian Military Keraneeism amounts to, General, is a convincing piece of evidence that you can bring very considerable talents to the working out of any fad you may be ordered to make presentable and excusable. This, however, is the gift of the courtier, not of the General: of the man who serves a Government, not of the man who saves a State. Your curious shifting of front about the short-service question must, I fear, be held to betray a like disinclination—inability is, perhaps, the better word—to the original, that is to be great. The four great events of your brief career as a General are—the capture of the Peiwar Kotal, the retirement to Sherpore, the march to Candahar, and the defeat of Ayoub Khan. Well, sir, I don't think you are yourself proud of the first action; it was overmuch scientific as, indeed, was only to be expected from your inexperience. At Sherpore you sacrificed Denham Massy, who had to stand, because if he had not, the enemy would have advanced so rapidly as to have seized Deh Mozung. His guns

warned yourself and Hugh Gough quite as much as they did Brigadier Macpherson. You must have despised your enemy, as well as have been misinformed of his movements and strength; you must, indeed, have absolutely misunderstood your own strength, as well as the intentions of the enemy, or, in the face of a seething city, you would never have left Sherpore with a garrison of less than 1,000 men, while you sent Baker to Maidan, 21 miles to the south, and deflected Macpherson ten or twelve miles to the north, while you left Massy with 4 guns and three squadrons of horse to cover the gorge at Deh Mozung, and guard the direct approach to the waiting and willing city. Your blunder was simply terrific, and only the doubling of the excited Highlanders saved you on that day from oblivion and your country from a worse disaster than the fall of Delhi. A very great deal has been said of your march to Candahar, but it seems to be forgotten that Sir Donald Stewart had only four months previously traversed the same route with a smaller force, had taught the enemy a severe moral lesson, and had improved the very road itself. The only peculiarity of your march, General, was that you set out for a new theatre, knowing you could not retreat; whilst in the case of Sir Donald Stewart, he knew that if he could reach and capture Ghuzneen, he might rely upon receiving assistance from the splendid army then at Cabul. You had picked

troops and picked officers, the best season of the year, and the almost certainty of an absence of opposition; but, then, you were a chief founder and ornament of the Military Mutual Adulation Society, and so, although you had a larger and better appointed force than Sir Donald Stewart, it is your march that is talked of, and his that is forgotten. As for the fight at Candahar, your enemy was divided in counsels and in strength; there was only a fringe of resistance; your own troops too were out of hand, and you drove Ayoub Khan back upon the very road by which he had advanced! This may be Generalship, but it was not so in the Peninsula; it was not the strategy of Lake, or Clive, or Havelock. A merely good General makes fighting, a great General ends it; a good General has to fight another day, a great General deals a blow which destroys not only armies, but the courage of those from whom the armies are drawn. You, Sir Frederick, are a good soldier, because you make excellent blunders, and because your fighting has always to be done over again. You are the pride of a clique, for they feel they have created you. You are brave to a fault, a splendid office-man, and a good soldier-student; but you are vain, puffed-up, and without that quality which makes an able man great. You, I am sure, need not to be told that it is not always the best First Lieutenant who makes the best Captain. You are an eminently successful and an

eminently deserving man, but it requires more than success and desert to be a great man or a great soldier—you, sir, are neither.

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

XIII.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE FIELD, LL.D.

DEAR MR. FIELD,—I approach you metaphorically on all fours. I make an involuntary obeisance as I write your name. I cross my hands in imagination meekly and reverently on my breast in your imaginary presence, and, like the great Southey when he prayed for inspiration to enable him to sing the glories of Waterloo, I pray to that deity, whoever he may be, who presides over communications to the great, to "support my strong ascent" to the height of this great argument. Most men in this vale of tears entertain a pretty good opinion of themselves. This human weakness is almost universal with humanity itself, but no one can come near the neat superficial form of intellectual content you illustrate, without realising that the opinion which you entertain of yourself,—your professed belief in the position you occupy in general public estimation—is a psychological phenomenon of a very remarkable kind. The truth is, my dear Mr. Field, that you are less possessed than exalted by a sense of your own importance.

Some thirty years ago, you were a remarkable member of a very remarkable Association—the noble army of undergraduates of old T.C.D. In those days, the forces, rather than the graces, of the academy were cultivated among the gilded youth who sojourned with you in the classic shades of your *Alma mater*. The wild young Irishmen of your time went up to Dublin to fulfil certain definite traditional missions of their University career. When the College Mentors had crammed them with as much Latin and Greek as they could hold (science was held in very small estimation at old T. C. D.), they were let loose on the city to smoke cutty pipes, shine resplendent in cheap jewellery, hang orange flowers on the statue of King William, fight coal-heavers, beat policemen, decoy bailiffs to a pump, vex public meetings with the "Kentish fire," drag the carriages of celebrated opera-singers in triumph through the streets—and generally disport themselves to the terror of the citizens, and the vindication of their own exuberant manhood and peculiar public spirit. In those days you were a Member of the College Historical Society, and you were superb on those periodical occasions when the beauty, fashion, and celebrity of the metropolis assembled to hear the "vapid orations flowing free" of the youthful Ciceros of old T.C.D. It was to you that the great Whiteside (who presided on one occasion) referred as follows :—"*The youthful orator who spoke with a fluency which I admired and*

a self-possession which I envied." These words strike, as it were, the keynote to your character, and give the clue to those qualities of intellect and—what shall we call them?—advantages of temperament, which led to your subsequent success. You came to India with the traces of the rough academical school through which you had passed fixed indelibly on your rough nature. You were surely the most extraordinary specimen of a Junior Civilian that ever survived one of the most extraordinary careers in the history of the Service. You started, or tried to start, as a young man of twenty-three or so, from that point where other men were content to end. You were not content with ignoring the views of your official seniors. You lectured and reproved them; you took them to task at their own dinner tables, and before their own wives, for what you considered their official shortcomings. You drew down on yourself wigging after wigging, rebuke after rebuke, threat after threat, transfer after transfer, social ostracism, official displeasure; but your equanimity was never disturbed, and your faith in yourself and your views was never for a moment shaken. You replied to Government wiggings in memoranda bearing no trace of personal irritation, conveying no sense of penitence or amendment, but in a tone of grave dissatisfaction, as if the duty of wigging rested with you and not with the Government which you served. A man so constituted may be avoided and shunned, but he is

certain to be feared as well. The easy-going officers of the old Haileybury *régime* began to look with undisguised alarm on the young and intellectual Sampson who had law and precedents at his fingers' ends, and who spoke of High Court judgments and Board of Revenue decisions with contempt. You thus almost commenced your official career with that faith in yourself which other men and superior men only attain as the result of long and varied official experience; and you saw in the most ordinary incidents and circumstances of your official life the early recognition by the Government of your exceptional powers. Thus, when you were once sent to officiate for a few months as Joint Magistrate to Purneah, the history of that tremendous incident, as viewed through the medium of your own description of it, ought to be allowed a place in the most solemn records of our time:— "Says Beadon to Eden, 'who shall we send as Joint to Purneah?' Says Eden to Beadon, 'there's no one fit to be sent (*sic*) as Joint to Purneah.' Says Beadon to Eden, 'where's Field? Has he gone home?' Says Eden to Beadon, 'he has not gone yet.' Says Beadon to Eden, 'stop him for the love of Heaven!' Says Eden to Beadon, 'I will;'" and he was stopped. And this was how Field was sent as Joint to Purneah. In 1864, you wrote for a public journal a series of articles on the Acts of Council, which attracted the attention of Mr. Sumner Maine, the then Legal Member of Council. Mr. Maine

was delighted with the grasp, vigour, and erudition exhibited in these papers. He sought your personal acquaintance, and from that moment you leaped, as it were all armed, into the judicial arena which has been the scene of your many triumphs, and for which you were crowned at last, but not without some serious interruptions. That Ayah affair, my dear Mr. Field, very nearly proved fatal to you, as it certainly would have proved fatal to a lesser man. There is on record the judgment of the High Court (that Court of which you are now a member) in which your conduct towards an unfortunate native servant, whom you believed to be in your power, is set forth in terms which, if shame and exposure could destroy a man, would most certainly have destroyed you. I don't want to be too severe. I cannot help feeling a sort of sneaking affection for you, for were we not boys together? But your conduct throughout that miserable business was from first to last simply characteristic, and the force of censure could no further go. Your social peculiarities partake of the strong and somewhat repulsive individuality of your whole character. You are, or were, the most genial of men, if geniality could be adequately represented by a constant, hearty, and robust appreciation of your own peculiar notions of humour. For your notions of what constitutes a pleasantry are very peculiar indeed. No man ever possessed a keener sense of the humour which is derived from the amused

contemplation of human failure, folly, and calamity. Most of us, as we grow older, grow somewhat more humble, a little more charitable, a little less arrogant over our own successes, a little more appreciative of merit which has *not* been recognised, of efforts which have *not* secured the prize. We know that the race is not always to the *swift*, the battle to the strong; but you are so constituted that unsuccessful merit is to you only another word for imposture and pretence. "How has he got on?" "What has he done?" "Has he got a district yet?" "No." "Well, then, what's the use of talking of his ability; he *must* be a fool." This is the way you reviewed the career of every man who was not from a purely deparmental point of view as successful as yourself. You were always thoroughly posted up in the incidents and circumstances which formed the history of the unfortunate one who had more or less come to grief in the Service. You relished your recollections of official failure as other men relish easy stories of sport, adventure, or flirtation, and you related them with the gusto of keen personal enjoyment; but there was no soul of mirth in your loud resonant laugh, and your smile was like the silver-plating on a coffin. You think yourself the greatest jurist of this or any other country, and of this or any other generation. But this is a gentle delusion. In the highest and truest sense of the word, you are no jurist at all. You have a memory like a

vice. Your faculty for analysis resembles an instinct. You possess, in short, every qualification for what you are—a great compiler and a very good common-law Judge—and nothing more. You are deficient by nature in those qualities of sympathy and imagination, without which no man ever attained to the highest eminence of any study which has for its subject the history and requirements of our common human nature. You are always sneering at sentiment as a thing outside law, and you are constitutionally incapable of realising the extent to which law is based on sentiment, and how the man, who has no sentiment in his soul, can never be, in the most important sense of the word, a really great interpreter of the justice and equity of the law. You could compile law books without end, but you could no more have written a book like Sir Henry Maine's Ancient Law than you could have won a battle. When a great naturalist discovers a fossil—a tooth, a claw, or a piece of skull—he re-constructs from those fragments the animal to which they belonged. Thus from the fragment of a Code, Maine re-constructs the whole social structure of that ancient society to which those fragments belonged; but to you—those fragments would suggest nothing to your unimaginative mind,—you would put to primitive civilisation the question you are always putting to the pleaders in your Court—"Show me the section, sir—show me the clause?" Yet I would

part from you in good humour. The great fault that remains is, I am afraid, a very hopeless one indeed. Every man, said D'Israeli, has a right to be conceited until he is successful. You have been very successful. Why then continue to claim and assert a right which you have forfeited many and many a year ago?

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XIV.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT HILL PINHEY,

Judge of H. M.'s High Court, Bombay.

SIR,—You are one of an august and much respected body. I know of no particular reason why I should address this letter to you while your much more distinguished colleagues remain unedified by the simple and elegant truths which it is, my happy province to tell to so many eminent, and, I doubt not, grateful stars in our firmament.

Probably, if the public voice were consulted upon the merits of the various honourable gentlemen adorning the Bombay High Court at the present moment, your claims to any conspicuous notice would be represented by a genteel minority.

But it is tiresome to address persons of such unqualified respectability as Sir Charles Sargent, or of such brilliant and well-recognised intellectual merit as Mr. Raymond

West. One cannot always be singing pœans and proclaiming one's thankfulness that in various high places there is, at least, as much leaven of the man of righteousness as of iniquity. The dull respectability (I must repeat the word) of the Chief Justice, is an uninspiring theme. He is, we will admit, a courtly man, with a sound faculty of law; and if he is a little prosy and stilted at times, he is generally dignified and extremely moral. Yet these excellent qualities of a much-admired mediocrity are not sufficient warrant for the generous unstinting analysis the public now expects from Sadyk Dost. Beyond that little weakness, which is, indeed, pretty well epidemic in Bombay, and can be illustrated in yourself perhaps as well as in Sir Charles, —the weakness I mean of chumming with numerous other impecunious members of society, such as High Court Judges, Members of Council, Commissioners, and similar paupers, with a view to eking out his slender pay, and maintaining the dignity of his position with as brave a show as is consistent with the principles of social and domestic economy obtaining in Bombay, beyond that amiable foible, I say, Sir Charles appears to me to present no sufficient points of idiosyncracy to excite my candid pen. On the other hand, in strong contrast to the prevailing mediocrity of the High Court, as forcibly and decently typified in yourself and Messrs. Kemball, Birdwood, and Bailey, there flames out

the singularly brilliant intellect of Mr. West, "that bright occidental star" as some enthusiast called him in the Native Press, with more appropriateness than is generally to be found in the outbursts of enthusiasm. But, sir, the joint compiler of West and Bühler, the incomparable analytic lawyer of the High Court, the authority upon questions of Hindu Law *par excellence* may be, and probably is, an admirable study for the rising griffins of the period, yet would, I fear, prove a singularly uninteresting object for portraiture. Let me mention him to you as an emphatic contrast. You will probably appreciate the salient points of difference almost as distinctly as the public do, and I can scarcely doubt that the contrast, so far from causing you pain, will be a source of lively satisfaction to you. After all, sir, there is a great deal more in the world than delivering elaborate judgments and shining a conspicuous beacon to the coming generation of what may be accomplished in the narrow groove of one's own profession. Law is possibly an interesting occupation for your duller hours; but you rise superior to the old superstition that a Judge never does, and never ought to do, anything else than judge. Lord Coleridge has lately been posing in a new and highly entertaining character. As the masher, Lord Coleridge, if perhaps not an unqualified success, was certainly a refreshing novelty. And yet, sir, I cannot but feel in how much higher a

degree you are equipped both by nature and a considerable experience for that fashionable *rôle*. Had we a Marie Anderson, and had some scurrilous print announced that your Lordship had formally proposed for her hand, the paragraph would not possibly have excited that lively sense of incongruity which attended a similar announcement concerning your great leader, Lord Coleridge.

To those who have seen you sinking the ermine in the motley, no consummation to any of your joyous enterprises could appear incredible. You are an extremely interesting person, the chameleon, as it were, of Bombay society. From grave to gay, is but the transition of a moment with you. From the sublime to the ridiculous (charitably supposing that you have by some unexplained process *reached* the sublime) would, I apprehend, be easier still. I have intimated that you are not an ascetic; that the onerous duties of your high and responsible position have not dulled your appetite for simpler and more juvenile recreations. Yet the reader who would rise here in disgust at the flippancy of your character would form a premature and possibly a mistaken judgment. Those who admire you will, I doubt not, refer your detractors to the Lord Bishop of Bombay for your character; and a reference to that august personage would certainly be productive of the most ample certificates. For, sir, the lightness

of one-half of your nature is only equalled by the solid ballast of the other. This is a beautiful arrangement. To those who carp at Judge Pinhey dancing in antique costumes with the zeal of boyhood, we can point out Judge Pinhey in sackcloth and ashes kneeling to kiss the Bishop's absolutory hand. The sanctimony of your character was probably undervalued seriously, until by that graceful homage on the Apollo Bunder with which you are credited (rightly or wrongly, who can say?) you gave the most robust assurance of it to a sceptic public. Judge Pinhey, the gay frequenter of the ball-room, is only one degree less entertaining an individual than Judge Pinhey expressing to the world, in a way perhaps needlessly emphatic, the naughtiness of his worldly self. In either light, sir, you are more successful in arresting our attention and perhaps in enlisting our interest than you can ever hope to be as a Judge. In that distinguished capacity, I do not know that you are much more of a failure than nine out of ten average Indian Judges; but you are certainly not remarkable as a success. No one would ever dream of applying to you the encomium—"for he is a Judge and a good Judge too"—unless indeed it were yourself. But I take you too seriously; you are not intended to be taken seriously. You have a wonderful faculty of putting yourself upon a level with your company, and as for the most part your company consists of young subal-

terns and junior frequenters of your favourite club, the element of levity decidedly preponderates in your character. You do not, I imagine, lay any claim to a dignified personality. It is very fortunate, for it saves you much vain striving after a shadow. And, after all, what is dignity compared with the pure joy of being slapped on the back, and "old Pinheyed" familiarly by the rawest of subalterns? That is popularity; it is great; it is worthy of any effort you must feel in that pleasant atmosphere of genial camaraderie, not to mention unrestrained personality. That, your youth revives; that, the reverend status of High Court Judge is as nothing beside the semi-sincere approval of the mess-room. Sir, you are admirable. Permit me to congratulate you upon your perennial youth; but let me also remind you that a keen observer of human nature has written—"How ill grey hairs become a fool and jester." There are some people sufficiently starched in their opinions as to wish that you would recognise at times the respect due to your office, if not to your person. It is not an edifying sight to see young Lieutenants "bullyragging" "an honourable High Court Judge." I have adverted already to that extraordinary system of economy prevalent in the upper circles of Bombay. I would only ask you, sir, whether you consider it decent on the part of High Court Judges and Members of Council to huddle into common

houses, like the overtaxed ryot or impecunious subalterns, or haberdashery young men, in order to save rent, and *dhobies*, and other incidentals of house-keeping? Let me tell you, sir, that such conduct excites contempt; and, taking all circumstances into consideration, I venture to think you would be wise to conciliate respect—where you very easily can—by spending some of your pay in maintaining the dignity of your position, instead of toiling for the suffrages of mashers on the one hand by a club life of festivity, and of ecclesiastics on the other, by a ceremonious observance of ritual.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XV.

TO SIR AUCKLAND COLVIN, K.C.S.I.

DEAR SIR AUCKLAND,—You are a most distinguished member of a most distinguished Anglo-Indian family. Your father was the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces at the time of the Mutinies, and he died in the fort at Agra, a victim to anxiety and over-work, while the mutineers were encamped round its walls. Among the civil heroes of that heroic period he deserves an honourable place. He did what man could do to stem the tide of revolt, and if his warnings and representations had not been neglected by a Government on whom all warning and represent-

ation were thrown away, the Mutinies might have been confined to some local outbreaks, which timely and vigorous measures could have effectually suppressed. But his warnings were unheeded until it was too late; and when the provinces which he ruled were, to use his own words, "in a state of ravage and riot," he accepted the situation, and laboured night and day in order that the shattered wreck of British authority might be kept above the waves until succour arrived and the tide of fortune began to turn. It is commonly but erroneously supposed that his imprisonment in the Agra fort meant the virtual abandonment of his authority over the province during the great crisis. Many a despatch, many an order, many a cheering word, many a timely suggestion, and many keen practical observations on local policies and local requirements found their way through the rebel lines to the men who served under him, and by whom he was held in love and reverence to the last. Your eldest brother, Mr. Bazette Colvin, was a Member of Council in Lord Lytton's time, and was, although a favourite with Lord Lytton, or perhaps because he was a favourite with Lord Lytton, a sound and sagacious statesman in connection with all questions of purely routine administration. Your brother, Mr. Elliott Colvin, the Commissioner of Meerut, died only a short time back. Without being a statesman and politician in any of the higher meanings of the term, he was the beau

ideal of a district officer—energy personified; and the manner in which he grappled with the Rohilcund famine in 1869, when he was Collector of Bareilly, earned for him the admiration of his official contemporaries, the thanks of the Government, and the profound gratitude of the Rohillas who, to the end of his valuable life, almost worshipped him as a god, or as the men of the frontier venerated Nicholson.

You, my dear Sir Auckland, are personally an illustration of the familiar phenomenon that brothers may differ from each other as much as the utmost strangers could possibly do. Even in personal appearance you bear little, if any, resemblance to the other members of your family, although they resemble each other so strongly that one has sometimes been mistaken for the other. The fay who presided at your births was entrusted with the task of distributing among the Colvins a certain number of gifts, and until she came to you, she performed the duty assigned to her in a very exemplary manner indeed. She gave every Colvin, who ever owned the name, strong commonsense and infinite powers of work. She withheld from every Colvin, who ever owned the name, wit, imagination, or originality. She gave them powerful physical constitutions, and in relation to the social side of their natures, the most orderly aspirations, and the most regular and conventional tastes. Weary with watching, she fell

asleep, and there stole into the room another fay, a spirit of mischief, who took the entrusted gifts from her open hand, and substituted for them others, the gifts which were really bestowed on you, and which have made you what you are, a puzzle and phenomenon to your family long before you became a puzzle and a phenomenon to the public. For they looked on you as you grew up, and they marvelled. You were a Colvin and you were indolent. You were a Colvin and you were as a boy dreamy and contemplative. You were a Colvin and you loathed application to the ordinary routine of public school and university study, but could master in a few hours, when it pleased you to do so (which was not often), difficulties which any other Colvin would have found insurmountable under a month. You were a Colvin and you loathed tracts, Sunday schools, charity sermons, goody-goody novels, temperance meetings, Exeter Hall cant, and loved Gil Blas, Boccaccio, Dumas, and some forms of literature, Italian and French, which, in your young days, were viewed as the mile-stones on the high road to destruction. It was the wise and witty saying of one of the wisest and wittiest of Frenchmen, that if you wanted to penetrate into the inner recesses of a man's character, you should come upon him unexpectedly in his own house, and observe how he is employed. Now, if a man in this way were to come on your brother Bazette, it is

certain that he would find him immersed in blue books and reports, and surrounded by red tape and sealing wax. There was always that "on Her Majesty's Service only" expression on his countenance which long years of devotion to official work seems to develop. If you came in the same way on your lamented brother Elliott, you would probably have found him drawing on his top boots—he almost lived in the saddle—for his sixth canter that day, a visit to some remote corner of his district where his presence was required. And if, my dear Sir Auckland, in the same way, a man came thus unexpectedly on you—well, would it be fair? Surely, intruders are very well in theory, but in practice they would never do. The stories told of you when you were Collector of Bustee are very numerous and very amusing. You would sign a number of papers, retire to your room, array yourself in your dressing gown, and spend the remainder of the day humming airs from comic operas, and drawing crayon sketches of ballet dancers on sheets of Government foolscap. A very good story told of you is this: when you were Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces, you wrote a demi-official memo. to Mr. Chapman, the then Accountant-General, one of the most strait-laced and puritanical of men. The official memo. occupied one side of the sheet, and the other contained a spirited sketch of a young lady in a high wind falling

off a donkey! The picture, it need scarcely be said, had no connection whatever with the subject-matter of the memo. Mr. Chapman, so the story goes, failed to recognise the accidental character of the incident, and with self-torturing perversity regarded the donkey and the young lady as a sneering illustration of his financial views.

These were the palmy days of your connection with the *Pioneer;* what time A. P. Sinnett could assemble round his hospitable board all that there was of wit, learning, and genius in the North-Western Provinces when the steady influence and direction of a controlling mind made itself apparent in the policy of the paper, and before the *Pioneer* became a receptacle of Simla gossip, personal and official, and was content to be nothing more. Sinnett, in the interests of his journal, cultivated men like yourself, but he was far too strong a man in those days not to keep the reins in his own hands. Can such things be, and overcome us like a summer cloud, without our special wonder? Yes, Sir Auckland, your valued friend, the careful Editor, hard headed politician, brilliant man of letters, has become the associate of Madame Blavatsky, the follower of Colonel Olcott, the disciple of Koot Hoomi, the victim of the clumsiest imposture in the name of a revelation which ever imposed on the credulity of mankind. The services which you rendered to the *Pioneer* about this

time were in their way invaluable. You were by far the most brilliant and versatile writer in a brilliant and versatile company. In those days the articles in the *Pioneer* were models of what leading articles should be,—pithy, trenchant, original, not disconnected fragments of pompous and ponderous essays, at once solemn and pretentious, and dull, the intellectual pemmican of the Anglo-Indian Press. As a master of literary style, you were inferior to Hunter, but to Hunter alone, and as a political critic, you far excelled Hunter in grasp, weight, and sagacity; you were almost, but not quite, as good an English scholar as Deighton; and as a teller of anecdotes you were fully equal to Keene.

Is it to be inferred from all this that you are deficient in the more solid qualifications of intellect by which the other members of your family are distinguished? Any such inference would be entirely incorrect. Despite your constitutional—what shall we call it—inertia; despite your indifference to the details of local administration; despite your keen enjoyment of the pleasures of life, you possess many of the qualifications of a great statesman—and a statesman in a sense which no member of your family except yourself has represented or attained to. People hold you responsible for the present muddle in Egypt. But what are the facts? You were responsible for all that was sound, far-seeing, and vigorous in that policy, and not in the smallest

degree responsible for the blunders and vacillations which have brought that policy to grief. You foiled French intrigue, defeated and exposed French chicanery, superseded French influence, and, by the energy of your advice and example at the time of the great crisis, Arabi's first revolt, you placed the ball, as it were, at the feet of your Government, and handed the victory into their hands. But the Khedive, with the approval of the English Cabinet, adopted a policy of compromise when the most thorough-going measures were indispensably called for. You left Egypt in disgust, predicting those embarrassments and difficulties which actually ensued, and you came back to India as Financial Member for a time. In your defence of the Ilbert Bill, you were not *en rapport* with popular feeling, but the extreme ability of that vindication was ungrudgingly admitted by your most strenuous opponents. Since then nothing has occurred to bring your name prominently before the public; but rumour has it that you are destined for a far higher appointment than any which you have yet held. Let us trust that is so. You are not a man to bear a life of idleness or inaction well. You like it too much. You are so constituted that great emergencies and great questions are, as it were, needed to bring out the great qualities of your intellect and character. You did not shine as Collector of Bustee, sitting in your kutcherry signing papers which

you never read, but you did shine when you stood beside the brave but hesitating Khedive, surrounded as he was by his revolted troops, and advised him to demand Arabi's sword, put him under arrest, try the traitor by court-martial, and shoot him if convicted. Let us trust that the promises of greatness are still with you, and that Indian public life, in its higher spheres of duty and employment, has not yet seen the last of the greatest of the Colvins.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XVI.

To SIR CHARLES UMPHERSTON AITCHISON, LL.D., K.C.S.I., C.I.E., C.S.,

Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and its Dependencies.

SIR,—When little more than two years ago you succeeded to the great office which you now hold—the charge of the fighting province of India—men recognised that the promotion was your due, and yet they could not forbear from wondering how it was that such preferment had come as a matter of course to you in particular. In the old days of the Company, the higher prizes of the Service seemed to be reserved for men who were members of special groups, and who embodied and kept alive the purest traditions of a bureaucracy

which was also an aristocracy ; an unacknowledged but powerful Tchin much given to nepotism and with a necessity for being exclusive. Once a member of an Indian family became a satellite of such a group his fortune and his promotion pursued him with the even and comforting recurrence of the seasons. Official greatness was just as certain to come to him as old age. With the incoming of a new generation there arose a state of things where new men had to be taken account of, and yet the tradition of the Secretariat training has survived, and you, although a new man, having once settled into the groove, in due time became—Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. There is no need for me to go back beyond your arrival in India, for your career—whatever its hopes may be—has so far been a purely and typical Indian biography, illustrative of the character of the Service to which you belong, and of the new era in which your lot has been cast. You have always shown in a marked way how greatly a robust physique assists its possessor to accomplish fabulous feats in the way of office work. A capacity to assimilate vast masses of information in a way to save your superiors from all unnecessary trouble, is the one useful quality to which you owe your first step in life. That step brought you under the notice of Lord Canning, and extorted from him the hackneyed saying that you were the best Under-Secretary he had

ever known. Further, like many other men, he mistook the art, which you possess in no small measure, of picking other men's brains, for native ability; and he left on record his sense of your services in a minute which was afterwards held to give you an unimpugnable claim to the post of Foreign Secretary. No doubt you were the right man in the right place for purely Secretariat duties; but Fate, which decided you should become an habitual presence in Council House Street, spitefully denied to you that without which no Anglo-Indian can be really great—a familiar and sympathetic acquaintance with the people. You gained in power of work, in skilfulness of application; you became a mighty man for dealing with cases, precedents, and presumptions; but the human element in your work grew more and more attenuated, and yourself, as you rose higher and yet higher, more coldly official, more officially unsympathetic, and more and more in the habit of treating "the office" as something impersonal and apart from yourself as an individual. Your collection of Treaties and Sunnuds is a fine piece of labour, but it is characteristic of your training and your temper. It does not so much give information to the public as indicate to Government where the best information available to F. O. is to be found. It is statistical without being historical, detailed without being descriptive. It opens the gates of native India to no man, and yet

no man can hope to get a hold upon the Feudatory system of this Empire who does not study its carefully-designed pages with patient attention. It is, in fact, for the Viceroy, what his list of native nobles is to every Political Agent—a guide beyond all things valuable, and yet the most indifferent as regards the actual work that has to be done. To you the Department credits —what is facetiously styled its organisation—a system where an officer never knows exactly what his rank ought to be, or for how long he may be marched about up and down some of the most fanciful grading ever known to any Service. So far as the grading goes, service under the Foreign Office is specially departmentalised; but so far as the working of the organisation is concerned, the 'Office' is free from all ties and all precedents, and can indulge in a mysterious kind of despotism, the effect of which is almost invariably to make its subordinates something more objectionable than the clerks of the famous Circumlocution Office. If the Foreign Office is to be taken as evidence, then, Sir Charles, you have no special faculty for organisation. Your constitutions—you have tried some in the Punjab—are only good so long as they are girded about by a piece of red tape. You were a renowned Secretary, strong in the favour of those you served, and, perhaps for that reason, weak in your dealings with those who had to look to F. O. for justice or for support.

It is the peculiar inheritance of this Department to be hated—it is feared, disbelieved in, distrusted, and hated—and if all tales be true, this is but a just Nemesis. But never was the F. O. so feared, so disliked, as when you presided over its destinies, and carried a policy of repression by sheer indifference and coldness to a point of success, little thought of in the days when you stood on the threshold of the Mutiny, seeking for a career. In your hands allies became feudatories by a silent, steady, relentless, unrelaxing pressure. You never dealt with a question of precedence without securing a concession of relative dignity to the Viceroy, and in this way justified the luck which made you a Secretary to the Government of India, when your contemporaries were bewildering themselves with the question of how many years an officer ought to take to become a Commissioner. If to-day the princes of India are the princes of the Viceroy, rather than the heads of sovereign houses,—if all native India has been silently mediatised—it is to you more than to any one else that the end is due. Your episode in Burmah calls for very little remark. You were, as might have been expected, always at your desk, and you left no arrears behind you. In the Punjab you appear to be a puzzle to your closest friends; you exhibit talents to command respect, and foibles to provoke alienation. You are in all your surroundings

immensely proper. I wish there was some other word to express the recognised 'goodiness' of the atmosphere at Barnes' Court and Lahore. You are true to your friends and your friends' sons, and for friendship's sake, as in the case of the son of Sir Henry Durand, you will take steps that you ought to know you will have to retrace. People may complain that your hospitality is not gushing, and does not run over; but no one can complain that you do not do the thing in a right way when you do it. Times change, and the pride of one's youth seldom becomes the satisfaction of one's middle life. Men find new ambitions, and, as they rise high, are more occupied in peering into the future than interested in recalling or remembering the past. There is a point at which the world demands of a successful man the surrender of the humility by which he justified his ambition; and so, Sir Charles, if you do not now talk of your being 'self-made,' and if you no longer point to a poor but honest parentage, you do reflect the reflection of Royalty, and seek to accustom yourself to the possible minor aristocratic methods of a much desired Baronetcy. Looking back over your career, it is not strange to find men complaining that you are not in sympathy with the province you govern—that is the one quality you never pretended to possess. You have never had the chance of learning the Punjab, though you were a very good Deputy Commissioner at its

capital. It was unfortunate for your fame and your success as a ruler that you were scarcely in the saddle ere you were called upon to try the nostrums of Local Self-Government. You appear to regard India as a field for theories, and, in spite of your training, are as confirmed and impulsive a Radical as Lord Ripon himself. It may be that the mellowing influences of a successful life will modify your politics, as they have modified your pride; and if so, and the change come soon, it may be that you will yet comprehend that what India requires is—development, not change, growth, and not revolution. I have said you are true to your friends, and even to your friends' sons. I doubt if you would have been the most successful of the competition-wallahs if you had not had the friendship of the *Friend of India*. That paper in its palmy days was far more than the *Pi* is to-day, the oracle through which the 'offices' performed certain ventriloquial feats called then "the forming of public opinion." You were a tower of strength and propriety in a peculiar and very proper circle; and you met your reward, for the *Friend* was never weary of praising you, never tired of keeping your name as a household word before Anglo-Indians. You gave the paper good service, and in return it gave you official fame, and created a belief in your future. I cannot help thinking that yours has been the real profit of the connection. It did you this service, that

it added to the luck of early promotion the difficulty of passing you over even in favour of your seniors. You are, perhaps, the luckiest man in your Service; but you are an example of good fortune it will not be well for India to have too often repeated. You accentuate the value of office, as compared with practical knowledge of the people of India, and so serve to show how wide and how unkindly is the gulf which the new despotism of paper, rather than of personal rule, has fixed between the people and the chiefs of that Administration to whose wisdom the interests of the people have been committed.

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

XVII.

TO CHARLES ELLIOTT, ESQ., C.S., C.S.I.,
Chief Commissioner of Assam.

DEAR MR. ELLIOTT,—The position you fill in general public estimation is one which it is easy to recognise and appreciate, but somewhat difficult to define. You enjoy that vague reputation for extraordinary ability, which is the common reward of officials when the work which they are doing, or have done, is not very easily "understanded of the people." Most officials—that is most higher officials—are quick to recognise, and, as it were, to resent this absorption of their official individuality, and by identifying themselves with some "burning question" of their time, they endeavour to establish

a claim to some more specific form of public recognition. This is a weakness the "last infirmity of noble (official) minds." It was, and is, the besetting sin of such a very smart man as Mr. Mackenzie. The poor man cannot make an after-dinner speech without betraying his desire to be identified in the public mind with the public controversies of the hour. An exception to this rule should be made in favour of Dr. Hunter. Hunter is perhaps the solitary example in this country of a man who has attained a high official position by means of qualifications and achievements which *from the first* concerned themselves with the public, rather than the official aspects of Indian administration. But the fact, though a great gain to the great doctor at the outset, is perhaps a disadvantage to him now. Dr. Hunter, as he somewhat pathetically reminded the Railway Committee, has been twenty-five years of India; and it is almost certain that he is by this time a reasonably well-informed man on all important questions of Indian history and Indian administration. But the public will continue to see in Dr. Hunter (the Member of Council and Gazetteer) the Dr. Hunter of "Orissa," and of the "Annals of Rural Bengal;" and to forget that, every one, even Dr. Hunter, must have his salad days, and that the salad days of Dr. Hunter were not a whit greener, only more celebrated, than the salad days of his brother-members of Council,—men whom their

worst enemies could never accuse of that unpardonable crime, the exhibition of any ability they possessed *too soon*.

Why is it, Mr. Elliott, that your career should suggest this peculiar line of reflection on the dangers which beset ambitious officialism in this country? Because, in my opinion and in the opinion of all those in any degree well acquainted with the details of your career, you have carried a tendency in the opposite direction somewhat too far. There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. There is a tide in the affairs of Anglo-Indian statesmen, which, taken at the flood, leads to the fullest measure of official success; and high and responsible as the appointment which you hold undoubtedly is, you were destined for something far higher, and if you failed to attain it, did so entirely through your own fault. From the first, from the outset of your official career, you had a creed, and by that creed you have abided to the last. That creed was this: you believed—you continue to believe—that Indian statesmanship and administration are synonymous terms. The grand requirement of the country, according to you, is not new Codes or new systems (the Codes in existence are, if anything, too numerous and too complex), but the pure, thorough, and efficient application of laws, more than sufficient for the ends of all good government and good administration.

Thus, it has happened that a great portion of your

official career in the North-Western Provinces was spent—shall we say wasted—in a long conflict with the theorists and doctrinaires of Anglo-Indian administration. For the task of maintaining this conflict with vigour and success, you were in some respects admirably qualified. You were the lion who tore his way through the legal net wherewith Mr. Whitley Stokes and the politicians of his school were seeking to enmesh the country. You owned a ready pen—a pithy and trenchant style—an unrivalled mastery of detail—an understanding which no sophistries could perplex—no jargons of political philosophy lead away. In the crisis of that struggle, when the country was groaning under the old man of the seas—new legislation—you struck as hard as you could on the side of commonsense, and you struck very hard indeed. I have said *in some respects*, and I have used that qualification very advisedly indeed. Your temper—especially in those days—was not that of an angel, and you had one weakness—an extraordinary one in any man possessing your experience of life, but doubly extraordinary in a man of your ability;—you could not always even in official communications on the gravest and most abstract subjects measure your language. Stupidity in any form was to you what a red rag is to a bull, and you went for it as the bull goes for the red rag. It is needless to say that you made a host of enemies, and that among them were some men as

able as yourself—men who ought to have been your friends—but whom you alienated by rough treatment. There is, or was, another side to your character and tastes not often found in common with the idiosyncracies of a man who excels in, and has devoted his life to, the work of public administration. I refer to your tastes for the lighter forms of literature—the delicate *soufflées* of intellectual recreations. What Macaulay says of Warren Hastings and Frederic the Great might have been applied with little or no qualification to yourself. You went about now and then with masterly reports in one pocket and indifferent verses in the other. Your taste in light literature was admittedly admirable. Few men could talk better on the subject, and you could recite passages from the master wits of modern song—Bon Gaultier, Ingoldsby Legends, Calverly, Dobson—in a manner which showed an exquisite appreciation of their peculiar humour; but then appreciation is one thing, and the "faculty divine" another, and very different thing indeed. For these things, my dear Mr. Elliott, are governed by laws and subtle analogies which, if they are *caviare* to the multitude, ought not to have been *caviare* to you. Years devoted to hammering at an anvil would not be good training for a billiard player, and a good wood-cutter is not, as a rule, a good *pianist*. Your lighter efforts, although by no means deficient in merit, were always wanting in that lightness

of touch which is the essence of delicate parody. Your touch was a thump; and in relation to this little peculiarity of yours, your ambition to take a place among the wits and versifiers of society, you always reminded me of an eagle trying to mix on friendly terms with canaries, and envying them their plumage and their song. This also carries us back to the palmy days of the *Pioneer*, ere yet the journal could afford, as it were, to be independent of wit, genius, political insight, or indeed any form of genuine literary power. The articles in those days were not written by the mile and inserted in sections—"Moradabad Settlement"—"No. 82." The journal in those days was something more than clumsy unofficial appendices to the *Gazette of India*. An irritated Secretary, galled by the disapproval visited on the more contemptible public aspects of a brilliant but faulty career would scarcely have been allowed to use the editorial 'we' of a public journal in his own defence. He never does so now. As the Artful Dodger would say—Oh! By no means, not at all, certainly not! To return to a greater and pleasanter subject—Mr. Elliott and his career. If you made enemies on the one hand, you made staunch friends on the other, and that especially among the *young* district officers serving under your Government. Your pet aversion was the solemn head of a department, who, through seniority, occupied a position for which

he was unfitted, and the duties of which he could bring no adequate measures of ability. Your pet affection was some zealous young officer, perhaps a year or two out from Home, in whom you discerned the promise of a future administrator. You loved at Naini Tal to have these "young ambitions" round your table, and in your social relations with them, you were as a boy amongst boys. Not a boy amongst them all could enter with more hearty zest into discussions on cricket, boat-racing, mountain-climbing (you were a born mountaineer), and in your house your young men forgot the Secretary in the companion and the friend. Many of them are still to the fore, and many of them hold the highest positions in that Government which you directed for so long with such consummate vigour and success. Alas, they are not *young* men now. And the chief, where is he? In the back-ground of Indian political life he looms upon the scene an awful shade through the mists and valleys of Assam. Thither their thoughts often follow him. What is he like now? Does he act with a lessened force? Does he write with a diminished fire? Has his heart been ever lifted from the shadow of his great sorrow? Could he still, as he once did, ascend the Matterhorn to the summit, or row a winning race the length of the Naini Tal Lake with the youngest and strongest of them all. Perhaps not, but of one thing they may feel pretty certain. The great administrator

will leave his mark on the administration of Assam, and those who come after him will know by his foot-prints the sort of man that has gone before them. Yes, thither from his friends, admirers and old pupils in the North-Western Provinces, there follow him greetings, remembrances—all that should accompany him to his distant raj—love, honour, obedience, for notwithstanding his faults, his impatience, caustic pen, sharp tongue—no man in India has warmer friends, or sincerer admirers than Charles Elliott. In connection with the Ilbert Bill your conduct was thoroughly characteristic. You supported the Bill in the first instance, but you saw the mistake almost immediately, and you asked the Government to come and see it with you. Wellington once said during a battle—"That was a false movement of mine just now, but it will lead to no harm, as I am myself the first to see it." The Government had the opportunity of being the first to see their own mistake; but they would not avail themselves of it, and we have seen what we have seen. A lesser man than Charles Elliott might have hesitated to follow the lead of Rivers Thompson; but there is no littleness in the man, and among his claims to the admiration of his countrymen, it ought not to be the least that he had the courage and manliness to admit that he was wrong.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XVIII.

TO SIR CHARLES ARTHUR TURNER, KT., C.I.E., *Chief Justice of Madras.*

DEAR SIR,—It is no flattery to yourself to say that among the infrequent eminencies of the Southern Presidency you are pre-eminently eminent. With the exception, perhaps of that economical favourite of fortune, to whom you delight to make constant allusion as the "illustrious victor of Kandahar," and of the political charlatan whose snappishness in the House of Commons has elevated him to a position whence for one lustrum he can, and does, misrule with admirable self-satisfaction some few hundred thousands of his Sovereign's subjects—with the exception, I repeat, of these two high dignatories of the State there is no European within the limits of your territorial jurisdiction whose name is known beyond the point where that jurisdiction ceases, east, or west, or south. It would be strange if, amid such a paucity of intellect, you did nothing beyond merely hold your own. Compared with your human surroundings, you shine out *velut inter ignes luna minores.* To be just, you would have been a man of mark in older times when Madras was in the zenith of its legal and political acumen; when its Bar

and its Bench were the strongest in India; when its Governors were men who achieved something more substantial than such success as is due to the publication of excellent, but fatuous, intentions; when the public interests of the Commonwealth were entrusted to the hands of a Fane, a Morehead and an Ellis; when the lines upon which the ship of State-education was to be built were fiercely discussed and bravely carried: in a word, in times which marked the birth of statesmen, of whose works your Presidency, India, and England herself, have reason to be justly proud. For you are a man of liberal sentiments and of generous aspirations, blessed with a constitution which defies the inroads of enormous toil: you have turned your long residence in India to profitable account by a conscientious study of your fellowmen's common wants and common aims, and the interpretation you have placed upon both does as much credit to your head as to your heart. You move among the people with freedom and with ease, and in your accessibility to natives as to Europeans, your Governor might well accept an example and a rebuke. But I who have studied you from afar, as is becoming to one who is not a Knight, or C. I. E., or a Chief Justice, and who owns neither five-thousand a month, nor the private *entrée*,—though his merits should entitle him at the least to the acceptable income—define in you as the very touchstone of your eminence and your

chief attribute for the attainment of high office, other than a purely judicial one, your capacity for a ready and well-placed sympathy. The aim of Government throughout the civilized world is to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and human ends are best achieved by human means. The cold sophist who from cloud land enunciates the formal platitudes which a tenacious memory and a copious common-place book enable him to filch from the labours of greater men becomes, apart from sympathy, in the words of South, "a distinct species to himself." Your warmer temperament has saved you from the error. You are not perfect; but in your ability to enter into the happiness and the measures of your fellowmen, you are in the enjoyment of a talisman more potent than a phalanx of servile secretaries, a body-guard, three palaces, and a genius for storing up "bawbies." No one who has carefully watched your career will deny you the possession of great ability. Had you elected to remain in England in lieu of accepting office at Allahabad, I feel assured you would have made for yourself a brilliant name and position at the bar. Your bent is not judicial. A life of sixteen years' hard labour under a tropical sun has neither impaired your appetite nor converted you wholly from an Advocate into a Judge. You still retain much of that controversial fervour which legal prejudice would banish from the Bench. You would make

an admirable advocate. You possess in a marked degree all the best qualifications for a leader at Nisi Prius. You are fortunate in a good presence and in the cultivation of whiskers which are strictly in keeping with all the best traditions of your profession. You own a good voice, which constant practice, on the Bench as elsewhere, enables you to modulate with considerable forensic skill. Your language is good, and easy in its flow, and your manner forcible. Above all, you can throw—and as a rule do throw—yourself completely into your subject,—so completely that if the sentiments you champion are not the sincere exposition of your views, you would have harvested a large fortune on the stage. With these advantages, to which should be added the display of unlimited clean linen and the adoption of sober-hued nether garments, your own scholarly attainments, your unflagging industry, your mental quickness, your familiarity with the law, and a heartiness which disarms even those who differ from you most bitterly would, I feel sure, have taught you to run a distinguished Parliamentary career, and to inscribe your name among those celebrities who have had the proud distinction of leading the Bar of England. Could I, with an enchanter's wand, redistribute at my sole discretion the seats of those in power, I would translate you into the Executive Council, where your knowledge of men and things would be of incalculable service to

your country, and your knowledge of law and long legal training save the Government from well-merited opprobrium. Had you shared in the executive administration of the land, the Chingleput scandal would have been wisely strangled at its birth, and your countrymen spared the profound humiliation that has resulted on the nomination of Dr. Maclean to the Salem Collectorate. You take, unlike your Governor, a solid interest in the politics of the Presidency in which it is the lot of both to dwell. As your appetite requires something more robust than a poached egg or an effervescing drink, so is it the prototype of your robuster intellect. I would quote you as an excellent example of the *mens sana in corpore sano.* And it is the men with sane minds that your unhappy Presidency at this moment requires.

The purity of your judicial, as of your personal, life is beyond all shadow of suspicion. But you would be more than human, and I less than honest, if I should paint you as the incarnation of perfection. It has been said—and, as far as I can see, with some degree of truth—that you too closely assimilate the *rôles* of Judge and courtier, that you assume too pliant an attitude towards the Government, and exhibit an over-anxious desire to secure their good-will. Your *quondam* chief of Allahabad was wont to speak with caustic bitterness of your desertion of your colleagues in their manly protest against the interference of the Supreme Government in

the notorious Fuller case ; and the world at large agrees with Sir Robert Stuart that your change of front was prompted not more by a conscientious view of duty than by a desire to enjoy the Viceroy's good-will ; your forecast has done infinite credit to your sagacity. That at times you over-estimate the respect due to the gentleman who fills your gubernatorial chair, and underestimate your own importance, as one of Her Majesty's Judges, to some painfully, to others, like myself, who had gauged your character with nice discrimination, was laughably illustrated in your treatment of the Duke of Buckingham, when that obstinate but honest descendant of the Plantagenets entered your Court as defendant and witness in a suit at the instance of your local cabinet-maker, Deschamps. It is reported that you rose from your seat, *salaamed* to His Grace, and implored him to be seated by you on the Bench. Your conduct I am told so far unnerved one of your two colleagues, that he caught the infection of your bad example, and half rose from his seat only to sink back in blushing confusion. To the intense delectation of the whole Court, Mr. Justice Kernan alone resolutely adhered to his seat.

A stoic of the Bench, a man without a budge ?

Once more ; when Government opposed the application for sanction to prosecute the perjured witnesses of the Salem cases, you marked your approval of this

unprecedented and improper action by tendering public thanks to the authorities for their courtesy in having intimated their intention to violate the law for reasons which were purely political and selfish. These may be, and I trust are, but trifling instances of temporary aberration. But some men say they indicate with exceptional clearness that flaw in your disposition and tendencies, that little rift within the lute, which, if not checked, may attain proportions detrimental to the best interests of yourself and of those you serve. I have watched these defects with honest pain; for among all the personages whose characters I have attempted to depict in these columns with an unprejudiced pen, there is none whose talents and whose virtues command from me a more respectful—I had almost said affectionate—admiration than do your own. For in the easeful and unbroken retirement of my library, I abstract myself from the passions and the prejudices, the bitternesses and the disappointments, the turmoil and the hubbub of the busy world. My criticisms are neither the offspring of favours past or future, nor are they tinged with the venom that is so often distilled by unattained ambitions. I can strip you of the trappings in which you are set, your scarlet robes and the mystical triad which adorns your name; and I can tear asunder the gauzy veil of your well-earned knighthood, awful and impervious barrier though it be to the pondering

crowd; and I can see you as a man. You need not shrink from the exposure, for few would issue as bravely from the ordeal. Guard but against the invidious inclination to meet—nay, to anticipate—the Government view on all occasions because of the tangible rewards of Government approbation, and you of all others in your Presidency are best qualified to lead and to advise, to warn and to educate, a well-meaning but bewildered and uninitiated people. The tendencies of the time are dangerous—the weakness of the executive criminal. It needs a strong hand and a clear head to arrest the one and to beard the other. You possess both. Utilize each frankly and boldly in one nation's service, and you will earn the lasting gratitude of two. You are very ambitious. You would like to replace Sir Richard Garth or Mr. Ilbert; you sigh for a seat in the Privy Council or a desk at the India Office. Your ambition is laudable: for your intentions, like your Governor's, are excellent, and your capacity for giving them practical expression, unlike your Governor's, very vigorous. It has been whispered to me that at times, when you contrast the Turner that might have been with the Turner, that is, you experience a sensation of wearisome disappointment. Take courage. The retrospect of your lifetime's labour is a record of much able and assiduous toil, not destitute of triumphs of which you may be legitimately proud.

You have had no inconsiderable share in the legislation of this country. You have won your spurs upon your merits. Before you stretches a long vista of honourable and profitable employment, the country is in a state of transition, and you are too wise to be deluded by the clap trap of "profound peace." Even your ambition need not turn aside from the task of so guiding the subject population, as to achieve the mutual aim of the rulers and the ruled without the loss of good-will or self-respect to either. The task is a delicate one, and I pay you a high compliment when I say I should like to see you at the helm.

Let me congratulate you on the way in which you have performed your social duties. Hospitality sits lightly and gracefully on you, and you are a genial host. Your guests have never yet felt that you were getting rid of them from a strict sense of duty at the cost of a contract with your butler at three rupees a head, barring champagne, but including soda-water, and breakages. So generously have you discharged your gastronomic penances that when you gave up house-keeping, and threw in your lot with a Puisne Judge, the direst malignity never ventured to whisper a word that could accuse you of meanness. It has not fared with you as badly as with some of your contemporaries. Society sympathises with you and with Lady Turner. The reasons which compel her to reside in England, and the regret

which is felt for her absence, is as genuine as it is universal. If your personal charms are the catholicity of your taste and your tolerance, you

> Do not indulge in sins you are inclined to
> By damning those you have no mind to.

You have been heard to declare that lawn-tennis on the Sabbath was not an offence which would consign the players to eternal damnation, and your orthodoxy has been known to permit you to make a fourth at whist on Sunday. This does not prevent your active interest in all Church matters, nor your putting briefless barristers in an awkward dilemma by handing them the bag for a trifle in the Cathedral. They might turn a deaf ear to the visible exhortations of a Member of the Board of Revenue, of a Surgeon-Major, or of an Accountant-General; but they are not proof against the special pleading of their own Chief Justice. I admire you for the munificent and cosmopolitan character of your private and public charities. You give freely and unostentatiously, letting not your left hand know what your right hand doeth. It is the recollection of your constant and genuine goodness which takes away the sting from those who would be glad at times to do you an ill service. It is the knowledge of the vast preponderance of your good qualities over your defects which kills the angry tongue and salves the rancour of some junior whom you have treated with impatient and

august asperity in Court. The natives do not worship you with blind idolatry. They are keen critics, and dissect you with admirable precision. But, on the whole, they are at one with all Englishmen who recognise in you a vigour of understanding far beyond the average, an honesty of purpose which survives the disposition of the courtier, a generosity of hand and heart which brushes away all minor flaws; a grasp and a digestion of facts coupled with a keenness of perception and a capacity for execution which should enable you to render to the country of your adoption services even more valuable than any which you have rendered her yet, and which, when rendered, will justly entitle you to inscribe your name on the roll-call of India's great worthies—her departed statesmen.

> What is your opinion? Have I painted you
> Faithfully as you are and as you may be?

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XIX.

TO A. P. MACDONNELL, ESQ., C.S.,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

MY DEAR MR. MACDONNELL,—A variety of accidental circumstances too recent to require more than a passing notice have combined to bring your name before the

public in a somewhat exceptional manner during the last five or six months. First there was the question of your *tullab*, which the *Pioneer*, with that nice sense of proportion which so often distinguishes that journal now, worked very hard indeed to persuade us, was one of the most important public questions of the day. Day after day, week after week, the *Pioneer* called the gods to witness that you were not receiving by at least Rs. 600 per mensem, the amount of 'screw' which you ought to receive, and day after day, week after week, the *Pioneer* asked us to weep over the fact that Mr. Baker was receiving Rs. 400 per mensem more than he ought to receive. This, according to the *Pioneer*, was the beginning of the end. The framework of society was at last beginning to tremble, and the towers of the State were nodding to their fall. But as we sorrowed with your sorrows, let us be joyous in your joy. You have been made a permanent Secretary, and your 'screw' has been raised to the proper figure at last, which be tidings of comfort and of joy. Blow loud the trumpet of Zion, make a feast in the high places, to-day the dead are living, the lost are found to-day.

Then there was the curiously direct association of your name and views with the Bengal Tenancy Act.

What are the functions of a Secretary? Is he merely the mouth-piece of the Government which he serves, or is it to be assumed that he is something very much

more than a mouth-piece—an essential element as it were for good or evil of the administration to which he belongs? The answer to this question is a very simple one. What a Secretary is, or is not, depends on three things,—1st, on himself, his views, temperament, ambition; 2nd, on the character of the Chief whom he serves, his strong points and his weak points; and 3rd, on the questions of current administration with which he has to deal.

A careful consideration of these three points is essential to a correct understanding of your character, both personal and official. I say personal and official, and I use the terms very advisedly indeed. There is a cant, a greasy platitude of slip-shod criticism, which commends itself with great force to a certain class of thinkers in our time. It is this. A man's personal character is one thing and his official character is another, and a very different thing indeed. A man officially may be a tyrant, a bully, a sucker of other men's brains, and yet in all the relations of private life—as a companion, host, guest—be a very charming, honest, and estimable character. How often do we hear this miserable paradox put forward and maintained by men, who ought to know better than to be deceived by such palpable sophistry? We live, as Bain demonstrates for us, mentally and physiologically under absolute laws, and those laws govern us in *all* our

actions, and carry with them their consequences and effects into every department of our lives, and every element of our being. In nine cases out of ten the qualities, good or ill, which pertain to a man's most private and personal character, are precisely those which, as it were, *come out* most strongly in connection with his official duties, and the reason of this ought to be apparent from the most obvious causes. There are two things which always test a man—a crucial test of his nature—power on the one hand, dependence on the other; how he employs the one, how he bears the other.

The public are fond of generalizations which save them the trouble of thought or discrimination. They like to be told in general terms that this man is bad and this man good; this man is cruel and this man kind. I am very sorry that, for the sake of clearness and brevity, I cannot convey my impression of your character in this way. You are a very complex product indeed.

To begin, you have a very hot temper, your best friends don't deny that, and your worst enemies don't allege that your temper, although very hot, is a bad one. When your mind was being constructed, the pepper castor shook a little, that was all. But a very hot temper, according to general popular impression, is very unfavourable to anything like coolness of judgment. Well, a certain warmth of temper may be unfavourable

to cool judgment, but it is not incompatible with it. You are a most remarkable illustration of that fact. Few men possess a cooler, a more dispassionate and unprejudiced judgment than you do. As regards that faculty by which a man tries to arrive at the abstract rights of any question which engages his attention, you approach the consideration of any such subject with perfect temper, and with a fierce determination to master it through all its ramifications, which is worthy of all praise; but the subject, let us say, is one which leads to difference of opinion, to controversy, to recrimination,—then your little failings of temper make themselves felt, and felt to your own detriment, in a very serious manner indeed. You are not a good, that is, not a perfectly cool and self-restrained controversialist, and your warmth in controversy conveys an impression of partisan feeling from which, as a matter of fact you are remarkably free.

You are called a radical by your enemies, because your name is associated with the Bengal Tenancy Act. *Primâ facie* it is utterly absurd to apply, or attempt to apply, the terms of English political nomenclature to the conditions and circumstances of Indian administration. Lord Mayo pointed out this absurdity, and in his own Indian career showed that English party views or feelings had no meaning for him. It is easy to call your views 'sweeping,' 'revolutionary,' and 'subversive'

of the foundations of society, and so forth; but then, any attempt to grapple by legislation with so vast a subject as the relations of landlord and tenant must be sweeping in the sense, that it must cover the whole ground occupied by the question itself. There is often more true Conservatism in change than in stagnation. I do not propose to criticise in detail the views set forth in your memoranda on this great question. The details of the proposed measure may, and I think do, require very great amendment; but I am convinced that you looked at the question in the first instance from the right point of view. Things could not have been allowed to remain as they were. The existing system of land tenure in Bengal is like a coat which was originally made for a boy, but which the boy—the zemindar represents the boy in this illustration—insists on wearing when he has grown up to be a man. It stands condemned at once by one simple objection. It doesn't fit. It is short in the sleeves, short in the legs, too small round the waist, and the seams are 'bursting' all down the back. The comparison which Mr. Roper Lethbridge instituted between land legislation in Ireland and land legislation in India was, perhaps, as absurd as any comparison could possibly be. Mr. Lethbridge warned us by the example of Ireland not to expect any finality from the Bengal Tenancy Act, because the Irish Land Act had not led to any final settlement of the

land question in Ireland. The answer to this is obvious. The Indian ryot has no quarrel with the State; the quarrel is only with the landlord. The Irish peasant only uses the land question as a means of maintaining his permanent and undying quarrel with the State.

But I have said above, your enemies call you a Radical, and, as if to prove that I am right in denying English party phrases, can apply to Indian political fights, you are worse than a Conservative in the matter of Local Self-Government. Here you are simply a despot without mitigation. It is a necessity of human nature that despots should be mitigated; so I presume a few years of responsibility will tone down your fervency, and persuade your high galloping zeal to amble with the sweet paces of an acknowledged successful career. What do you mean, however, by talking of "an elective body on sufferance;" the phrase is illogical, not to say nonsensical. It is the phrase of a man who has reached a corner in his life race, and can look at the liberality of an elective franchise one way, and at the despotism of the delegation of power on sufferance the other way. Halt not thus between two views. Mix not the unmixable. There can be no sufferance with an elective body, for the right of election, once conceded anywhere, even by the Mahdi at El Obeid, can never again be taken away. Now-a-days, it is not the people who give up anything, it is the Governments;

and when a high official talks about the right of election possessed on sufferance, he is splitting hairs, and sowing the seeds of unpopularity for himself and those whom it is his chiefest duty to make popular, by interpreting the wisest features of their statesmanship wisely.

This much for the first consideration,—your temper and disposition as it affects your dealings with any questions entrusted to you. It is a balance in almost equal proportions of gain and loss. The gain accrues from your zeal, fiery energy, indefatigable labour; the loss begins to be realised when you enter the arena of political controversy, and when the warmth with which you support your views leads the public to distrust the judgment in which they originated. I call this a loss and a loss of a very serious description indeed. You may be right, and the public may be wrong; but politics is a relative, not an absolute, science, and the art of refuting and stultifying society is a very different and a more perilous thing from the art of persuading and convincing it.

There is next to be considered the character of the Chief whom you serve. And here we need have no fear. Mr. Thompson is not the man to throw over a devoted lieutenant, because he sometimes uses a hasty word, or hits out from the wrong shoulder in the heat of controversy, "who can be wise, amazed, furious, temperate, loyal, and neutral in a moment." Those

who admire you and wish you well, and look forward to your official future with confidence and good hope, feel satisfied that you could not be in better hands.

Then there is lastly the character of the current questions with which you have had to deal. They have been lately exceptionally difficult and exceptionally delicate, and allowance should be made for the fact. If you have sometimes stumbled, you have done so on ground where the coolest and wariest walker might sometimes lose his head. Now is the time, pull yourself together, the great struggle is only commencing. If you are victorious, use your victory with moderation; and if you fall, "as fall full well you may, for never saw I promise yet of a more bloody fray," behave like a MACDONNELL to the last, and go down fighting.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XX.

TO THE HON. SIR STEUART COLVIN BAYLEY, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,

Member of Council of the Governor-General of India.

SIR,—You have the merit and the advantage to belong to an old Indian family, whose traditions are for the most part connected with Bengal. Those traditions are honourable and distinguished, without being famous;

they illustrate the difference between respectability and distinction; nearly all the men of your name have been distinguished for their talents and the official positions they have achieved; and yet they have never attained to the rank held by the Lawrences; they have been eminently successful, but have always missed being great. It would almost seem as if it had been reserved for you to break this tradition, and to write your name upon the shining roll of Indian worthies in more enduring letters, and on a higher level, than any Bayley has yet done. You have a family taste for scholarship and surroundings which afford repose to the mind whilst gratifying the fancy; and although you have done much, and are one of the most prominent men of your generation, you are by nature shy, sometimes even to a fault. Yet you possess with this shyness a vein of drollery rather than wit; you can appreciate the fun in others, without yourself being a cause of fun. In fact, your shyness, as is sometimes the case with men of keen perceptions and active intellect, is not far removed from a certain quaintness, all the more effective because so wholly unexpected. Who but yourself would have made a note in his diary—you are old-fashioned enough and quaint enough to keep jottings of your experiences,—who but yourself would have written: "Dined with——. A pleasant evening. Had some music, chiefly through S—'s nose"? But you possess in a large measure the

happy faculty of adaptability. You never seem out of place, no matter what strange office you are strangely called on to fill. You learn quickly, and master details when other men are apt to drift from meddling into confusion. Above all, you are well-liked. You have been missed, whether you left Chowringhee, or Bankipore, Shillong, or Hyderabad, and you have buttressed your fame as one of the most trusted and trustworthy of Indian officials, by causing your progress to be followed by more good wishes than would be sufficient to spoil a man less honest and less manly than yourself. When I glance at your Indian career, I am somewhat puzzled, for you seem to have been everything, or nearly everything. If few men have risen to be Magistrates and Collectors of the first class in the short space of ten years and-a-half, fewer still can claim to have an acquaintance with, I may say, literally all branches of the Government service. You have been a good Executive officer, an indifferent Judge, a clever and most hard-working Secretary, a pushing and far-seeing Chief Commissioner, a popular Acting Lieutenant-Governor, a trusted Political, the Special Lieutenant of the Viceroy for Famine and Famine Works, and Additional Financial Secretary to the Government of India; and you are now that Member of the Council to whom the reversion of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal belongs as a matter of public confidence and public

expectation. A man who has done so much, who has had such wide and varied administrative experience, who has impressed his worth upon the heads of his own Service, and who has attracted the special favour and recognition of men who differ so widely as Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon, ought to be a man of unusual power of mind, as well as of unusual power of pleasing. If, therefore, I sought to find the distinguishing characteristic of your career, I should say that it is to-day, as it has been from the day when, with less than seven years' service, you became *pucca* Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, its promise. You have always, in all positions, given promise of doing something greater than your actual work, of rising higher than your contemporaries; and you still promise the same thing. It may be that if you rule this province, you may find scope for qualities not unsuspected, but hitherto little exercised; and that, relieved of the duty of being a courtier—a duty to which you have taken with your accustomed ease and readiness—you may reveal those rarer attributes of the statesman without an exhibition of which the most lucky of officials must be content to remain an official. In the Bengal Secretariat, you have left the reputation of a great labourer, strenuous to overtake your work, and unsparing of self. You made the same impression when you relieved Lord Lytton of that multiplicity of details with which, for causes I shall not

here more than hint at, he was unfitted to deal as much by habit as by constitution. Your greatest successes have been achieved in Behar and Assam, though it required very peculiar handling indeed to manage Hyderabad. In Behar, your popularity was great, and is great,—so great that the planters may be said to have adopted you; and yet they always treated you with infinitely more respect than they showed to the great Famine Commissioner. Paddy Hudson would have bitten his tongue off before he would have ordered you to sit still on an awkward ride in the way in which he suggested quietness to the scandalised mightiness of Sir Richard Temple. You are painfully near-sighted, and yet you could manage to get over the most awkward places without halting,—places where other men shied, and deemed they were showing their wisdom. You understood the men you had to deal with; and though no one ever accused you of being blind to the native side of any question, you yet laid the foundation of that better understanding between the Government of Bengal and the planters, which has saved the Behar indigo trade from sharing the fate of the cultivation in Bengal Proper. In Assam, your stay was just long enough to cause men to regret your departure as a loss to the province. You carried with you from Behar a recommendation for manliness and honesty which made you at home at once with the tea-men. They looked to see

you do something for Assam and were prepared to second your efforts. To you Assam owes not a little of that impetus which has made the subject of its communications a primary consideration with your successor. You, Sir Steuart, saw the importance of working the Assam coal-fields, and to you it is mainly owing that the enterprise, which resulted in the opening of the Debrooghur-Makum Railway, ever took practical shape. Then, to you Dhubri owes its importance, and the connection with Kaunia which has resulted in so much good. Assam was not long ago almost as far removed from the capital as if it were in Western Australia. It is now within easy reach, and year by year the barriers of its isolation are being removed. You were, it is true, connected with Assam for only two years; but they were years of splendid work. You grasped the needs of the province with a firm and practised hand, and proved yourself an administrator of the best stamp. This reminds me to say that, so highly were your qualities as an administrator thought of in Behar, that it is to this day an immovable article of faith throughout the province that if you had been left to deal with your own people in your own way, the famine work would have been done just as thoroughly, and at infinitely less cost. Planters did not relish Sir Richard, nor his ways; they lacked the necessary training in the art of high-falutin. They enjoyed your

quiet hit at the great man when he was fussing all over the Dinapore Railway Station. No one could comprehend what was in the wind, what he meant, or what he wanted. You, however, settled the matter, when appealed to, by suggesting that, perhaps, he "was going to fire off a minute." Whilst in charge of the Assam Province, you relieved Sir Ashley Eden for some four months of the cares of Government in Bengal; and again succeeded in convincing the public of your fairness and honesty of purpose. They accepted the work you then did as the promise of a successful administration at a future time, and not a few were sorry when Sir Ashley again resumed the reins of authority. And now I come to the one painful episode of your life—the one cloud which went far to mar the sunshine which had waited on your footsteps. In the grave and great question of the Ilbert Bill, you—the one man who knew Englishmen in Calcutta, in Behar, and Assam—you took the wrong side. The courtier overcame the statesman, or in some way your caution and your experience were both lulled to sleep. The disappointment was felt everywhere, and felt bitterly. You had had exceptional means of knowing the mind of your countrymen, and your voice was uncertain at first, and then raised against them. It is true that your manly outspokenness—your frank and loyal confession of error—in some way removed the feeling against you,

and in some way restored you to your post of favourite with the men of Behar. But, Sir Steuart, the real bitterness was, that for a full year you had lent yourself, and your valued character for honesty, to the keeping of the intended attack upon the Europeans secret from them. Where you failed most was in not insisting, as only a man with your peculiar service could have insisted, upon the right of Englishmen to be as much consulted as natives in a matter affecting them solely, before the Government committed itself to a conflict by broaching that matter in the Legislative Council. Let the dead past bury its dead. The fierceness of the fight has passed away, and men think now more of the stress of your position than of your confessed failure to measure the character of the crisis. Your popularity suffered eclipse rather than injury; and if to-day you were to find yourself at Mozufferpore, you need have little doubt of the welcome the warm and generous hearts of the planters would give you. It is not that they forget, or that even they forgive, but they know one mistake cannot alter that sterling honesty, that manliness, that Englishness, to coin a word, which they have always regarded as characteristic of—Sir Steuart Bayley.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXI.

To JAMES MONRO, Esq., C.S.

MY DEAR MR. MONRO,—You are not now in India. You most probably will never see India again. You have been selected by the Government to fill a most important and responsible appointment in connection with the English Detective Police Department as successor to Mr. Vincent, and your connection with Anglo-Indian official life has been finally severed to your advantage, perhaps, but to the serious loss of that Service which you served so long, so faithfully, and so well. And yet there is a certain fitness about the appointment which you have received in England, which is calculated to recommend it to the approval of your friends. You held many appointments in India—from Assistant Magistrate to Commissioner—and you more or less distinguished yourself in them all. But one of the last appointments which you held was that for which, by nature, temperament and training, you were most fitted, namely, the appointment of Inspector-General of Police. Hard labour made you a good Magistrate and a fair Commissioner; but you were born a detective, and a detective you will die.

We live in a world of sin and sorrow. We live in a world where a great many generations of people must have been employed in detecting and defending themselves from the rascality of a great many other generations of people,—for a great many cycles of time. Now, if the doctrine of heredity holds good in any degree, a great many people must be born with strong hereditary tendencies towards rascality, and a great many other people with strong hereditary instincts enabling them to detect rascality. But the law, like most of Nature's laws, works somewhat unequally. One man gets too much of a faculty or quality in which another man is deficient, and thus the distribution in individual cases is too often anything but fair. A good many people, for example, are born, and go through life like the Vicar of Wakefield and his family without suspicion of other people. To compensate for this, some people are born with the faculty or quality of suspicion, developed to a phenomenal degree of acuteness; and it is to this last class that you most emphatically belong. Coleridge once said—if you want to think of a man as a whole, try and imagine him as a child, and then reconstruct him step by step into the present entity. If I apply this test to you, it breaks down at once. I never met the man with an imagination equal to the task of realising Mr. Monro in long clothes—Mr. Monro on a rocking-horse. What the 'cute Yankee said of

himself might surely be said of you. You came into the world with one eye open, and screamed the instant you were born, to prevent, if possible, the inevitable slap on the back from the nurse.

It follows from all this that you are a hard man—well, you are a hard man—an uncommonly hard man. There may have been originally some soft spots in you, but they have been so carefully filled in that it may be doubted if you know where they are yourself now.

From this it might be hastily inferred that you are a sort of Anglo-Indian Scrooge; but any such inference would be certainly erroneous.

Hardness of heart is, as a rule, the too common effect of selfishness and want of imagination; and if you were a hard man in this sense, or from these causes, there would be nothing very notable in the fact that you were a hard man at all and the circumstances might be allowed to pass without observation. Your hardness does not come from either of these causes. You are not, as the world goes, a selfish man. You are certainly not a very selfish man, and you have a very lively and even powerful imagination. Your hardness is the result of a specific cause—the training of your faculties for many years in one specific direction—and that direction I have already indicated—the detection of crime. The practice of every handicraft, so we are told, produces in time some ailment, or deficiency

peculiar to itself; and mental pursuits are governed by an analogous law. Your friends were always immeasurably proud of the reputation you enjoyed as a great police officer and your present appointment shows that that reputation was fully deserved. Well, I would be numbered with your friends. I congratulate you heartily on your new appointment; and yet, knowing you so well as I do, I cannot but think that you were destined for something much higher than your present position in any degree represents. The cause of all failure, or comparative failure, was the cause of your vanity in the exercise of a specific gift. You had an instinct, not only for a rascal, but for all the various artifices and subterfuges which rascality employs to conceal itself from observation and elude detection. An experience, which you used to relate about yourself—what a treat it was to hear you relate it!—will, perhaps, serve to illustrate better than any abstract criticisim could do some characteristic tendencies of your intellect and disposition and what they implied, both in the way of advantage and disadvantage to yourself. There was a certain adroit native swindler in whom for a long time you met your match. When he was captured and convicted for the second time—he had given you an awfully long run for it—you were resolved that he should not lead you the same dance again. So every precaution which your experience could suggest, or ingenuity

devise, was taken by you, and by all the other Local Governments and Administrations at your suggestion, which would insure his capture, in case he ever re-commenced his professional career. He was released at the expiration of his sentence, and you were tranquil and assured. The very night of his release, he committed a most daring instance of theft, and then vanished from the official eye, as it appeared, into space. He went from your gaze like a beautiful dream. Then, the chase commenced again. If the directions which you had conveyed to other Administrations had always been carried out as they ought to have been carried out, the man would have been captured in a very short time; but they were not. They were always carried out imperfectly, or too late. The released convict was always a few hours ahead of you, and his disguises were so perfect, his movements so puzzling, his schemes so well laid, that you were inclined at last to give up the pursuit in despair. Time passed, and the convict was still at large — now heard of here—now there—often very near being captured, but still not captured. Then he seemed to disappear altogether. You grew melancholy. Your food ceased to nourish you. There had gone from your world the glory and the dream. What could have become of him? Perhaps he was dead! The idea was intolerable. What a triumph to die, and die in freedom, with all the police of India after him!

At last you received a communication from a Magistrate, a friend in the North-Western Provinces, saying that he, the Magistrate, had devoted himself for a considerable time to co-operating with you in the pursuit of the thief, and that one of his ablest subordinates had obtained some valuable clues, and was well on the track. You were delighted. You wrote thanking and encouraging the Magistrate, but nothing came of his exertions. The mention by the Magistrate of this particularly sharp subordinate, who took such a particular interest in the case, set you a thinking, and you sent one of your best men in disguise to the North-Western Provinces station from which the information came. *Tableau*—in the subordinate, your detective at once recognised your friend, the thief, who had been engaged for a considerable period in the process of hunting down himself. You did not at all dislike this man. On the contrary, you regarded him with that stern joy which warriors feel in foemen worthy of their steel. You received him again with a gentle sigh of relief and gratitude, and you listened with sympathy and delight to the various arts which he had practised to baffle your pursuit. You met, the convict and yourself, with mutual smiles and mutual appreciation. The convict pointed out to you the real cause of his escape, in the fact that your instructions were not always understood. "Ah! Monro Saheb," he said, "you see you cannot be

everywhere, *and I knew and calculated on that.*" You were grateful—nay, more, you were touched—you leaned upon your hand your manly brow, and wiped away the closest resemblance to a tear which you ever shed. In your eyes this man was a melancholy instance of the misuse or rather misdirection of splendid natural gifts. The man was a thief—but he might have been a Prime Minister.

Now, if you were only, or even chiefly, a splendid detective, your career would be a subject for nothing but congratulation, both to yourself and to your friends. The highest prize of the Service in that line is now within your grasp. But who that knows you—who that has had the pleasure and privilege of your personal acquaintance—can for a moment think you were not something very much more than a police officer of the highest type. You were a vigorous political thinker when you took the trouble to think about questions of abstract politics at all—(which was not often)—and your memoranda on Local Self-Government and on the Ilbert Bill were among the very best to which the great controversies gave birth. But the opportunity for distinction in this arena of effort fell way from you almost as soon as it occurred.

You were on the wrong side—that is, on the wrong side in your own interests—and you commenced somewhat too late. It required such an awakening of public

feeling as the Ilbert Bill excited—such an alarm on the trumpet to summon you to the fray. In that Homeric battle no man struck harder blows on the side of freedom and common. sense. But as, we have said, you were on the wrong side—on the further shore from Chief Commissioners and Members of Council. A long time must elapse before the Administration which you had mortally offended would be out of the way, and in the meantime you were nearing the end of your official tether. And so you went home, and so you accepted your present appointment, and so there was lost to India one of the strongest brains and most sagacious thinkers employed in her service in our generation.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXII.

TO BRADFORD LESLIE, ESQ., C.E.,

Agent, East Indian Railway.

SIR,—That you are a man famous in our little world of India, no one would be disposed to deny. You have done things which only fall to men who are favourites of Opportunity, and who bring to their work a brain-power above the average, and a brain-power with a bent in a given direction. There are, we all know, mute inglorious Miltons; there are also Engineers whose

capacity remains in the chrysalis state, because they have not found favour with that coy sister of Fortune—Opportunity. Fortune may select the man, but it is Opportunity which decides whether he shall be great, instead of being lucky only. Now, you have had one or two opportunities, the which you have turned in many ways to account. Your name is great in the land, and yet men still ask—who is Bradford Leslie? You are a public man, and yet not a public character, and to the outside world, perhaps, your best known characteristic is your inaccessibility. You would baffle the most desperate of interviewers, simply because you are fenced in from such examples of the profane world. Nothing is sacred to the interviewer, except, perhaps, Koot Hoomi Lall Sing and Mr. Bradford Leslie. You are, sir, one of a family in whom talent is hereditary; the son of a man who, when the century was young, made his mark as a portrait-painter; you are the brother of two men whose names stand high on the roll of the Academy, and who have won their spurs in a group of men who have revived the glory and the grace of English art. In your case, the inherited taste for art may, perhaps, be inferred from the reliefs which do not adorn the East Indian Railway House. When a special talent seems to mark a whole family, it will often happen that in one member the cleverness common to all seeks some new and almost antagonistic direction,—the

antagonism is not unfrequently more in form than in substance, the love of art is still preserved; it is only the practice of art which is altered. The bent of your mind early declared itself even when you were no undistinguished pupil of one of the most successful schools of the great Babel—the City of London Grammar School. I am not going to dwell upon the benefits to a boy of being well grounded—my own recollections of the process are even now, perhaps, somewhat too acute for the impartiality upon which I pride myself. But there is something of even greater importance to a young man than being well grounded—I am obliged to use the phrase, though I abhor it in some senses—and that is the falling into good hands when he sets about fitting himself for the part he intends to play in the battle of life. You, sir, fell into good hands. Articled to Isambard Kingdom Brunel, a man whose splendid genius and dauntless energy gave the Engineers of England the first place amongst the inventors and workers of the past two generations, you were from the outset of your career, compelled by the circumstances of that career to study great works in all the details of their construction, and to accustom your mind to the swift application of new means to sudden ends. You had also the advantage of being constantly reminded that strength can be obtained without resort to clumsiness, and that, rightly used, there are vast reserves of

strength, endurance, and stability in the more efficient arrangement of material. It was a great thing to win the favour of a man like Brunel, whose name was connected with that of the white Elephant of the Ocean—the *Great Eastern* steamship. But it was a far greater thing for a young man to be placed under such a tutor as Glennie, and to be actively engaged in the construction of so magnificent a triumph of engineering skill as the Albert Bridge at Salt Ash near Plymouth. That you turned your opportunity to good account must be inferred from Brunel's having recommended you to the service of the Eastern Bengal Railway Company, on their applying to him for an engineer who should be able to grapple successfully with the bridging difficulties of a line which crossed the drainage of a Delta like that of the Ganges. Your work on the line was successful; so that when the Goalundo extension was resolved upon, the Directors turned at once to you as to a man whose experience they could trust, and whose training promised a solution of the problem of how to bridge the Gorai. It may be, Mr. Leslie, that you may be called upon to carry out greater works, and more important works; but you will never again have the chance of battling single-handed with a very hydra of difficulties,—never again have the chance given you of showing an invention which never tired, which was equal to all emergencies, and a power and a grasp of

the work to be done which made success, so to speak, inevitable. It was not so much in the planning of the famous bridge that you achieved your brevet as an Engineer, as in the endless spring of resource which anticipated many difficulties, and at a point where you had to create your own workshops and train your own workmen,—effectually, and in the quietest and most matter-of-fact way, conquered those difficulties, which could not be anticipated or forecasted. Out of that great opportunity, you, sir, came as a man with a great reputation. The question of your rank as an Engineer was settled, and settled completely. You had justified your Master's recommendation; you had honoured your training, and you had shown yourself worthy to be ranked in the class, of which Isambard Kingdom Brunel was one of the chiefs. But even in the hour of your triumph you were busy with new plans. I remember, at the opening of the bridge, how hard it was to find Mr. Leslie. You could not get away from Lord Mayo,—no one ever succeeded in doing that, and you, of course, had to come out of your shell; still, it was evident that there was a shell, and that even a Viceroy found it a tough one to penetrate or circumvent. Those amongst the curious who attended the ceremony of your victory over the dangerous and obstinate Gorai might have found below the embankment, to the left of the bridgehead, a Swiss assistant, anxious and willing

to exhibit a sort of platform on stilts—the stilts resting upon a kind of water-tight canoes; this was the model of your next work—the sample of your next achievement,—a section showing the mode of opening a floating bridge, designed to span a tidal river and to carry a large traffic—the Hooghly Bridge, in fact. I, sir, abominate the Hooghly Bridge. For a little more money, you might have given us, a little higher up the river, what is to this day a grievous want of the capital of India, a permanent bridge between Calcutta and its western manufacturing and traffic storing suburbs. I admit the engineering merits of the Bridge—I wish I could not—but it is too good, it answers its purpose too well, and it therefore effectually blocks the way to a real permanent bridge. Still, I do not go so far as Mr. Sibley and some other irreverent wags who, with equal wit and engineering fancy, miscalled the Floating Bridge—Leslie's *machan*. But talking of bridges reminds me of another structure of this kind—the invention of an odd, unoccupied moment, the child of chance, and the result of a multifarious using-up of the sweepings and odds and ends of the Howrah Railway Yard. The Railway Overbridge outside of the station is a freak—and a very cheap and nasty freak too. I would even say its corrugated iron sides are not far short of a nuisance. I entirely decline to regard it as an engineering work, and only regret that faithfulness

to my mission compels me to mention anything so hideous from my point of view and so slipshod from yours. The change from the Calcutta Bridge to the Calcutta Municipality seemed natural enough, but turned out in every way unnatural. It is not my business—I doubt if it be any one's business—to endeavour to seek out the causes of your want of success and want of popularity as a Municipal Engineer. But I may say that this episode was the most discontented portion of your career. It did not last long, and it was not brilliant whilst it lasted. It was not written upon your forehead that you should be the Haussman of the capital of India. On July 1st, 1876, the successful Engineer—the Engineer who was moving to greatness—disappeared inside the portals of the East Indian Railway Office, and henceforth was transformed before men into the Agent—the Director in India of the largest, the most important, and the most vital commercial undertaking in the Empire. It is understood that the eclipse was remunerative, and so it ought to have been. The change made reputation profitable, but it forbade it to become renown. It left Bradford Leslie a name only, and removed him as a strong entity, mighty to perform great works, from the circle of our Anglo-Indian life. It is true that the Hooghly Bridge makes a new call upon your genius and your energies; but your work now is overshadowed by your own greatness,

the glory of the official, that is, of the Agent, extinguishes the brightness of the Engineer. This may be a gain to you in one sense; it is a loss to the country and to your splendid profession on the other—a profession which seems to cull for its own nourishment all that is strongest, and brightest, and keenest in the youth of England of to-day. And how have you succeeded as an Agent? To-day you are almost an unknown influence to the bulk of the merchants who make your Railway a success. That you are shy, no one can ever forget who remembers your funny display at the dinner when Sir Andrew Clark first announced a Railway policy for India, and first made a Railway Conference possible. You simply were "unaccustomed to public speaking." The feeling which then overmastered you follows you about in your daily life and in your official greatness. No man of an equal or similar position is so hidden away behind "Personal Assistants," Private Secretaries, or other adumbrations of his own exaltedness as yourself—and what is the result? The one place in all Calcutta where you are certain to find no sympathy with trade—no *rapport* with commerce—is the House of the East Indian Railway. That House is remarkable for one or two peculiar policies. Staples of trade which are restricted to the Railway for their carriage are invariably made to pay; and Engineers—the more thoroughly they are

Engineers the better—are presumed to be in a special sense the men best fitted, not to make the line only, but to nurse it as a commercial enterprise. About the first policy, look at coal; surely, Mr. Leslie, to cheapen the freight on coal is to benefit the industries of the country, and to cause an improvement of traffic. But no;—the East Indian Railway House can reduce the charge on wheat, but not on coal. Ah! Mr. Leslie, where is your political economy? As to the other matter, I do not know whether Engineers, as in the Port Trust, are a kind of men who carry their Committees on their shoulders, or whether there is some unexplained superstition in the mind of the Public Works Secretariat of India; but Engineers are presumed to be specially gifted with the commercial faculty, and Royal Engineers to be endowed with a double share of this most excellent gift.

It may be, perhaps, because of your shyness, or your more than English reserve, that you seem, all through your career, to have manifested an unusual confidence in foreigners. You are also, it is reported, greatly impressed with the capacity of the natives for engineering works. Under your auspices a native has built the East Indian Railway Offices,—a building, of which it has been said it combines the demerits of a bastard Italian style with the merits of a carpenter's gothic;—the extension of the terminus at Howrah; the Howrah

Jute Mills; Ralli Brothers' Jute Warehouse at Naraingunge,—about which the little birds whisper whilst they shake their small heads; and latest of all, the new offices in Mangoe Lane. This is a fair list of work for one man, and may be taken to prove that, with judicious patronage, natives can develop qualities they are not ordinarily supposed to possess. Your lack, not of sympathy, not of talent, but of commercial training, causes you to commit faults which result in squabbles, in which you are wrong with a tremendous obstinacy, and the high-handedness of an enclosed and carefully surrounded greatness—officially. You promised to be a great Engineer,—you are even now thought of as a great Engineer; and when the follies and mistakes of your Agency have been forgotten by that lapse of time, which is always kindly to those it desires to have remembered, you will still, as an Engineer, form one of the landmarks of Railway progress in India.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXIII.

To F. B. PEACOCK, Esq., C.S.,

Officiating Member of the Board of Revenue.

MY DEAR MR. PEACOCK, — Mr. Herbert Spencer, our greatest explorer in the field of speculative thought, elaborated some profound theories on social evolution which have now met with wide acceptance and approval. Evolution, as Mr. Spencer has shown us, is not confined to the physical universe. There is a moral, social, and intellectual, as well as a physical, struggle for existence going on around us for ever. In that struggle social types—the birth of peculiar combinations of circumstances—are produced, modified, or die out with every generation that passes from us into "the dusty crypt of darkened forms and faces." Thus it happens that a melancholy interest attaches itself to any observation of your character and career. You belong to a school of Anglo-Indian Civilians which will certainly be extinct very soon, and which we can very ill-afford to lose. You are one of the renowned Haileybury men; and in ten years from this time there will not be many Haileybury men left in the service of this country. If you merely went out with the class to which you belonged, there would be nothing

in the fact to call for any special observations, or, perhaps, any special regret. There are many Haileybury men who, in taste, temperament, and general cast of thought, ought to have been competition men: and *vice versâ*, there are many competition men who might have been Haileybury men. But personally you have always represented the difference, not only between the two systems, but between the social and official conditions which constituted that difference, and that in the most marked and exceptional degree.

The other day, Mr. Buckland drew a picture of the Haileybury Civilian which had the merit of being very amusing, but the demerit of not being very accurate. Some of the Haileybury Civilians may have drunk somewhat too much, have gambled somewhat too freely, devoted somewhat too much time to sport; but these little peculiarities could not have been anything like universal or even general among the class of men who laid broad and deep the foundation of Civil administration in India. But Mr. Buckland, if he somewhat exaggerated the social peculiarities and proclivities of the individual Haileybury Civilian, drew a contrast between the conditions of official and social life in India as they were in the old Haileybury time and as they are now, pregnant with interest, instruction, and truth.

Mr. Buckland mourned over the days gone by, and showed that those days belonged to a time never to be

recalled, during which all that was best in the spirit of Anglo-Indian administration had a noble field for exercise and development; and he showed us how that field is gradually becoming narrower and narrower, until, withdrawn from direct contact with the people, the District Officer sinks into an overworked clerk—*sans* all that once made him a power in his little dominion, *sans* knowledge, *sans* sympathy, *sans* real observation, *sans* Indianising, *sans* everything.

That time is even with us and at hand, but it is not yet. We have still with us some men like yourself, who can bring to bear on the discharge of their official duties that invaluable quality so easily recognised, so difficult to define, which is summed up in the word experience. The higher forms of statesmanship are very little governed by logical formulas. The man who can say—and say with perfect truth—this measure won't do, this measure is good in theory, but will prove a failure in practice, would often be very much puzzled to give anything like a satisfactory logical reason for the faith that is in him; but nevertheless, the faith is there, and the faith is founded on motives and impressions which are often worth to the cause of good government all the blue books that were ever written. Herein lies your peculiar strength as an Anglo-Indian administrator. Any of your Secretaries might, from a purely literary or argumentative point of view, write a

better State paper than you could. But there are few men in Bengal—there are probably few men in India—who can estimate more accurately the (what I may call, for the want of a better word) *workableness* or *unworkableness* of a measure than you can. You trouble yourself very little—perhaps not enough—with abstract political theories as applied to Anglo-Indian administration. "How will it work?" In this question is summed up all that you care to be guided by in connection with your official duties. Mr. Buckland mourned over the want of personal sympathy now existing in this country between the rulers and the ruled. Sympathy is founded on knowledge, and in this respect it can scarcely be doubted that the Haileybury men possessed an enormous advantage over the men of the new regimé. They had time to know the people, and the people had opportunities of knowing them. They were not always rushing from district to district to 'act for,' to officiate, to do the eternal *budli;* they were not constantly going Home for three months; their whole time was not absorbed in clearing off arrears of returns; they abode among the people, abiding amongst them knew them, and knowing them ruled them in a far more unconventional, but it cannot be doubted in a far more thorough, and practical, and happy manner than they are ruled now. And the worst of it is that the change which has taken place was altogether

inevitable. We may recognise the administrative requirements brought about by railways, telegraphs, &c.; but it is useless to deplore them.

Your present appointment is one which keeps you a great deal tied to the desk; but the spirit which guides your pen is not a spirit of the desk. It is a spirit born among experiences and impressions gained by years and years of intimate contact and thorough personal knowledge of the people,—you gained that knowledge, not only in the ordinary course of your official experiences as a District Officer, but almost as much in what may be called your extra-official experiences as a *shikaree* and a sportsman. There may be one or two men in Bengal who actually *know* more about tigers than you do; there are scores of men who talk more about them than you do; but there is a sort of free-masonry in these things, and among the *knowing ones*, it is known and recognised that Fred. Peacock has seen about as much of tiger-shooting as most men who have ever been to Bengal. Well, Dhubri knows you. Mymensingh knows you well, and it is said that when you were a District Officer. the tigers took to reading the *Gazette* with a view to being duly posted as regards the vital matter to them—your appointments and transfers.

He is always a true man who is a true sportsman. He is manly, to be trusted by women and weaklings, to

beloved and followed by other men. He is capable of self-sacrifice, of understanding delicate matters of forbearance, and is above the folly and the cowardice of persecution. It is a fortunate thing for England that what Lord Salisbury calls "the Imperial spirit" is fed and strengthened, is kept alive, and made a living influence with the English people, by their love of fair sport and manly sport. That a true sportsman should, when he became attached to the work at head-quarters, be called to hold office as a Steward of the Turf Club, was a matter of course. You have made the office a matter where men trust without question, and give confidence without stint, and a higher tribute to any man than this I should like to be acquainted with. You took up with firm hands what Ben Roberts had commenced, and to you it is due that the Calcutta Meet now stands confessed as the Premier racing gathering in India.

The almost entirely practical character of your official qualification is not without some disadvantages of its own. As Pope tells us—men, like books, can be read too much. You hold theory as applied to administration in unmerited contempt. Mere theory is always contemptible ; but practice is not the antithesis, but the complement of theory. All sound practice is based on sound theory. The most practical sciences originate in the most abstract speculations. The men

who theorise about administration are not, as a rule, practical administrators, or men who know much about practical administration. But why is this? Because men like yourself, thoroughly acquainted with practical administration, hold theories and generalisations in contempt, and prefer to spend their lives in action rather than thought. Thus it happens that the Service possesses political economists and administrators, but the political economists are not administrators, and the administrators are not political economists. In Mr. Cotton we see something that resembles a combination of the two, but the result is not encouraging.

Turning to your social character, the contrast you present to the coming race of Bengal Civilians is even, if possible, more strongly marked than the difference of views and work. You inherited from your father the instinct for knowing men, and the judgment for appraising them. He was beyond question one of the greatest of English lawyers, and the greatest who ever adorned an Indian Court. But quite as remarkable as his wonderful knowledge of law, his prodigious and accurate memory, and his wide and varied learning, was that faculty born in a man, and not to be acquired, which made him appreciate differences of men as well as of circumstances, and which, because it made him a judge of men, made him also a just and upright judge, one who dealt out equity instead of the harshnesses

and hardships of mere law. If you do not pretend to your father's great capacity, you can pretend to his knowledge of human nature, to his wide sympathy, his singularly correct judgment, and to his calm instinct to follow what was fair and right. Hence, in your case, more, perhaps, than in that of your contemporaries, do we notice the contrast between yourself and the modern pattern of Civilian.

The young Civilian of our time is emphatically a very sad young man indeed. He is not "sad as night from mere wantonness," but sad from causes only too well calculated to extract the gaiety from the gayest nature that ever lived. Much study hath made him pale, and lean, and dull, and leaden-eyed. It takes him about five years in this country to shake off the weight on his spirits engendered by premature seclusion and overwork. He begins to recover when he begins to forget. The Haileybury men had never too much to forget. They were educated up to the ordinary standard of English gentlemen ; and for the rest, what they learned they learned in the land in which they passed the best portion of their lives. A robust, cheerful, gaiety of disposition is your happy possession. Vigorous devotion to work, with equally vigorous devotion to pastime in times of relaxation, is your motto. As I have said, it is melancholy to think that the type of Anglo-Indian official which you represent is probably

doomed to become an extinct species. But let us value it while it is still ours. Let us hope that the time when it shall pass away from us for ever is still distant. And in thinking of men like yourself, let us cherish the recollection of a race of men who nobly represented the best qualities of the English character in its dealings with subject and alien populations—the fine old Indian Gentlemen, the men of the olden time.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXIV.

TO A. W. CROFT, ESQ., M.A., C.I.E.,

Director of Public Instruction, Bengal.

MY DEAR SIR,—Though last, not least, delayed until now, not because you did not suggest yourself to me long before, but because I failed in every attempt to realise you—to grasp in anything like a satisfactory manner an individuality so complex, varied, and full of change.

Does any one know you? Do you know yourself? Is there anything inside of you to know? Surely, there must be, for your mind is as full of machinery as a clock is full of wheels. Most men have minds which are made by the million. They belong to the common delf, the willow pattern order of creation; but the clay from which your intellect was constructed must have

been of the finest porcelain. When the forces of nature employed in its construction had finished their task, they patented the invention, and it remains unimitated and unique. Are you a great thinker? You might have been if you had not arrived long ago at the conviction that there is almost nothing in this world worth thinking about. There are many things worth seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, but not worth thinking of. Are you a great scholar? You certainly would have been. As it is, without being a specialist, you are, perhaps, the best all-round well-read man in India; but then two-thirds of what we know, according to you, consists in a confused conglomeration of bad guesses after useless facts. Are you a great administrator? Well, yes; or, at least, a most vigilant and efficient administrator; but that is because, in the application of your faculties to any specific object, your intellect works, as it were, by itself with the unerring precision and certainty of a machine. But as regards the work itself, and its results, do you believe in it? Are you proud of the intellectual fungus which caricatures the name of culture in educated Bengal? But this, after all, is not your concern, or your responsibility; you are not the Frankenstein of this creation, but only the machinery, at once powerful and delicate, by which Frankenstein has done his work only too well. Are you a great sceptic? By no means. Scepticism, according to you, is only

credulity in another form. The man who undertakes to say this cannot be the case—I won't believe it—must believe in some conditions—governing existence which renders the thing he disbelieves in impossible. Are there any such conditions? Is anything impossible? Assuredly not. Your mind resembles a needle placed in the centre of a circle of magnets of equal power. It retains amidst the conflict of creeds, opinions, and ideas and feelings, the delicate poise of absolute impartiality.

Do you believe, then, in nothing? Absurd! You are full of beliefs. Is not the world in which we live a world abounding in *facts*, the belief in which guides every action of our lives, and makes up all that we mean by experience—happiness or unhappiness—misery or joy? Beliefs indeed—who ever doubted the *reality* of beauty, skill, pleasure, or statesmanship, Mrs. Langtry, whist, acrostics and aided schools? Are you a great cynic? Certainly not. A cynic is a man who turns with disgust from what he condemns as worthless or frivolous in the society around him. But nothing—person or thing—is worthless in your estimation. There is something in the way of instruction or amusement to be got out of everyone and everything, from Mr. Ilbert to a Municipal Commission. Stop—I am wrong! You once, and only once in your life, met what you believed to be a thoroughly worthless man. You shudder

to think what the future of that man will be. If he lives to old age, how terrible will be the agonies of retrospection. In a desperate and immoral attempt to save the game he revoked on purpose and *he didn't save it.*

You were at one period of your career connected as an amateur *litterateur* with the leading Mofussil paper in this country. Your articles were characteristic. They abounded in those refined felicities of diction which are your delight. Your literary touch resembles in delicacy and finish the touch on the piano or violin of an accomplished musician with another element always present—permeating every idea, influencing and determining every syllable, a fixed and abiding good taste. But, speaking with diffidence, I think you sacrificed too much to the form, and thought too little of the substance, of your literary work. The individual sentences were admirable; but the general effect of the whole was not so satisfactory. Your articles seemed to be composed of a series of little literary cameos each very exquisite and beautifully finished in itself, but without that sequence and connexion which is essential both to the music and symmetry of all the higher forms of the best English prose. It is, however, a great pity, in the interests of literature, that some of your best contributions to the *Pioneer* were never reprinted. They were intellectual *entrées*, and the delight of the literary *gourmets* who at that time were very numerous in Allahabad.

Your style was always considered almost perfect by such competent judges as Sinnett, Phil Robinson, and above all by the grand old man—the literary father of us all—the great Julian himself. In this opinion I was never able to concur. It always possessed, and possessed to an almost painful degree, a certain hard, metallic, epigrammatic, clean cut finish, but was always wanting in softness, variety, and ease. It wanted the living heart. Criticism was your *forte*, and you specially excelled in that form of criticism which concerns itself with the dissection and exposure of those pernicious fallacies which we classify under the generic name of cant. Your method was characteristic. Gentle phrases with bitter meanings—a steel claw under a kid glove—censure dropping like milk, but biting like vitriol. Even in relation to style—of the style is the man—perhaps in a very peculiar degree in relation to style—the inner nature of a man will impress itself upon his diction. We have the authority of Tennyson for the fact that "heart helps head." Your head never yet asked any assistance from your heart. If it had done so, the preposterous request would have been contemptuously refused. Yet who that has ever heard you speak could doubt that you had a heart, for you certainly seemed to get your speeches by it. You turn, instinctively turn, from every aspect of sorrow, calamity, or failure in the world around you, as men with an eye for the picturesque

turn from the physical disfigurements of a fine landscape. *They spoil the view.*

You have made, on the whole, a capital Director of the department over which you preside. The official charge which you had in trust was to keep a very complicated and cumbersome piece of official machinery in good working order. And this you have done. All the cogs and wheels and cranks and pistons of that machine have been well oiled under your vigilant supervision. But how about the machine itself; was it worth the trouble which you have bestowed on it? This, however, is only a detail. It works. There your responsibility begins and ends.

Your friends and admirers are of opinion that you are more or less wasted in connection with the duties of an appointment, which are now, and always must remain, duties of a more or less routine character. Your intellect is essentially inventive—full of resources and creative power; and inventive organisation, as applied to our present system of State Education, has very little scope for exercise or development. On the other hand, I cannot think that your employment in the higher and more difficult lines of general administration would have been attended with the success which your friends have predicted for you. The most technical and systematic legislation is often based on a correct appreciation of the force and tendencies of the most irregular human

sentiments. Your want of sympathy—with sympathy—the negative attitude of your mind towards beliefs, ideas and feelings by which human beings in the aggregate are governed—would always have stood between you and that influence over your kind which is essential to a true statesman. Your abilities are equal to almost anything, but so far as preference or prejudice is concerned, you might have drafted the Ilbert Bill, or written the letters of Brittanicus, or both. Yet there is one department of public Administration—Finance—in connection with which your really great abilities have never had sufficient scope. You were born with what the Scotch call a *head for figures*, and you take the same sort of pleasure in manipulating a volume of statistics that a conjuror does in manipulating a pack of cards.

Up to a very recent period you were a most successful man, and on the whole, you have deserved your success. Your natural endowments are great and varied, and in some directions even splendid. But the Nemesis which waits on continued prosperity, although evaded for a time, can never be finally or entirely escaped. At the height of power and prosperity you have been overtaken by a calamity, or rather by two calamities, which have made you an object of scorn to your enemies and of sorrowful solicitude to your friends. You have been praised publicly, outrageously praised, by Dr. W. W. Hunter, C.S.I., C.I.E., and you yourself have been made a C.I.E.!

Schiller divided human beings into three classes:—1st, those whom we can think of as having come from Heaven; 2nd, those whom we can think of as having come from—the reverse; 3rd, those whom we can never think of at all except we think of them in relation to the world in which they live. I try to think of you in connexion with the first—a halo, a harp, and a damp cloud—and the result is incongruous. The second is an impossibility, more outrageous and incongruous than the first. But the third—surely, the solution of the problem lies here—a gentleman, a representative man of culture of the Nineteenth century, September 20th, in the year of our Lord, 1884.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXV.

TO GENERAL SIR DONALD MARTIN STEWART, BART., G.C.B., C.I.E., S.C.

SIR,—The post you occupy is one which is rarely filled by soldiers whose greatness is gratefully acknowledged by the nation they serve. It is a post where a man may link his name to history, and yet, as a rule, those who hold it are rather admirable officials than great captains. And from this statement of the case I do not exempt even Lord Napier of Magdala. His campaign in Abys-

sinia was a marvellous example of administrative ability, but when he did fight, he was surprised, and had to thank the steadiness of his men for the victory which followed the brave rush of Theodore's Abyssinians. You have been an exceptionally lucky officer; but like many others of the present generation, you have not had enough of regimental duty. You make an admirable office-man, and, if need be, you possess the Anglo-Indian habit of hard and steady work; but you do not shine as a soldier. Few men in so exalted a position are so little known to the general public. Your character, your ways, are little known, and even your services are a matter of speculation. Already you are half forgotten, and in saying that, I describe pretty accurately the place you hold in the estimation of those whose proud goodwill makes the fame of contemporary leaders. You had seen service on the frontier; but the Mutiny found you a Captain holding with a handful of Volunteers the Allyghur District, and gave you the opportunity of proving your gallantry by conveying despatches from the Government of the North-Western Provinces to the General besieging Delhi. It was a brave thing to do, and from that time Donald Stewart became one of the inevitable heroes of the *Friend of India*, and one of the founders of the mutual laudation society. That paper was never tired of vaunting the merits, or of proclaiming the services, of yourself and Sir Henry

Norman. It is good to be praised in season and out of season. All through the Mutiny, at Delhi and again at Lucknow, you were well to the front wherever work was to be done; and out of that great struggle you emerged with the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel. It is a matter for speculation whether, if you had had more service with a regiment, you would not have been a better commander, but that question need not be discussed now. It is one of the faults of the Indian Military system, that as soon as an officer shows any promise, he is removed from the handling of men to the handling of the pen. After the Mutiny little was heard of you by the public until you received the command of the Bengal Brigade in Abyssinia, and held Sir Robert Napier's base. Here the army owed much to your administrative skill, and to your acquaintance with office work. It was a thankless post, with plenty of the work most abhorrent to a soldier, but at the same time most necessary,—work the value of which was shown in the unchecked progress of the army on Magdala, and in the freedom from anxiety about his supplies, which the General was lucky enough to experience. Then came your transfer to the Government of India's Penal Settlement. Can any one tell why you went to the Andamans? Can any one help regretting the tragedy which darkened your administration of the Islands? No doubt the Viceroy, no doubt Lord Mayo,

was a man of singular fearlessness, and possessed with a singular dislike of military surroundings, and yet there are many arrangements which suggest themselves, any one of which would have prevented the catastrophe. I do not say you were in anything to blame. It is the bitter privilege of on-lookers to be wiser than the players; and it is the saddest gift of our little human heads to be wise when wisdom is useless. If to any man the fate of Lord Mayo was a sorrow, an abiding regret, it was to you—and so I pass it by. It was the one great misfortune of your life,—the one cloud which has marred and blurred its good fortune,—a shadow which the world may forget, but which must ever poison your recollection and your retrospection. But from the Andamans you came back to military life and the command of a Bengal Division. The appointment was not popular; it was regarded as a job; but it led you again into the pleasant paths of fortune. It led to your being selected for the command in Southern Afghanistan,—a post where an administrator was wanted quite as much as a commander. At Candahar your government was a success; for if the British soldiery declared you were too lenient to Ghazis, the people, on the whole, were reminded of the security and prosperity of British rule, and were loath, when Mr. Gladstone determined to condemn his great rival by undoing his work, to exchange an English General

for an Afghan Governor. But while peace and prosperity seemed to mark the state of things at Candahar, affairs at Cabul went all wrong ; guns were lost, Sherpore was invested, and English supremacy had to be re-asserted. To you the Government looked for aid, and to you the supreme command was given. You left Candahar with a weak division, and marched on Kabul ; and if the enemy were broken and routed before you reached Sherpore, the presence of your troops and the report of the punishment they had dealt out on the way, undid, so far as it could be undone, the mischief of General Roberts' contempt for his opponents. But, Sir Donald, you, as a soldier, cannot be proud of the scramble at Ahmed Kheyl. For four days you had your enemy in view ; you knew the only point where his columns of tribesmen could make a stand ; and yet, as Napier was caught at Arogi, so were you caught at Ahmed Kheyl. The Afghans had no trained officers, no guns, and no reserve ; and so, when their first rush failed, all failed. It was a fight in which the customary contempt of British Generals for their enemy was only not punished because the soldiers bore up against the strain of a fierce onslaught, and saved the day. The fight had its uses. The Afghans saw that all the chances they could possibly reckon upon had been in their favour, and still they failed. That lesson went home, and the clans held back from further

useless bloodshed. In the equipment of Sir F. Roberts' columns for Candahar, and again in the way in which the evacuation of Cabul was effected, your great administrative experience came fully into play, and earned you a reward which more renowned soldiers might envy, and which more famous Generals have not obtained. A baronetcy and the command of the Indian Army were rewards you could scarcely have anticipated,—rewards which placed you in the front rank of English soldiers. As head of the Army, your administration has been, on the whole, justice tempered with unadulterated jobs. You are fair so long as you do not know a man intimately; but now and then there is an eccentricity of patronage before which officers are astonished into a sort of hysterical silence. But though the Army may deplore such ebullitions of wilfulness, it is, on the whole, content with your administration. Where you have failed is in military statesmanship. Sir William Mansfield was a wise and trusted counsellor as well as the right hand of the Government. Sir Donald Stewart is the right hand only, and a right hand with an exaggerated idea of the duty of obedience. What soldier having any sense of political affairs could possibly have consented to the reduction of guns and men to which you have lent the authority of your great position; and what ought to have been your great experience. That

blunder, and your weakness about the Ilbert Bill,—a question on which you seemed to support authority against your own convictions and the sentiment of those you represented,—must be responsible for the fact that you are neither popular nor trusted. When I say trusted, I mean no man believes you are so great a General as you are an officer. For the rest, your character is very like your appearance,—more formidable on the surface than anywhere else. You are simple, brave, and kindly, honourable and just, and a Christian, an admirable family man, but not a great soldier—and not a man to whom a nation would turn with restful confidence in a great crisis.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXVI.

TO THE HON. MR. L. H. BAYLEY, BARR.-AT-LAW,

Senior Puisne Judge, High Court, Bombay.

DEAR SIR,—You hold a distinguished position, not merely in virtue of your ability and your hard work, but in virtue of your vanity. I do not object to vanity; variations in vanity make variations in character attractive and even acceptable. This is especially the case when the vanity is harmless, or only a brilliant light by

which other traits of a man's nature are brought in a somewhat prominent yet kindly fashion to the notice of his friends. Now, my dear sir, this attractive foible in your case comes out in a tendency to see yourself as the Honourable Lyttleton H. Bayley. Brevet rank of this sort is sometimes conferred on one's-self as a suggestion of courtliness, and it is sometimes conferred by others as a tribute of courtesy; which it is in your case I do not stop to enquire; but of the fact that you can indulge in what I suppose I must call the sweetness of self-suggested flattery, is proved by the solid evidence of the handsome pair of silver shields which you presented as prizes to your well-loved comrades of the Bombay Volunteers. But you have but little need of vanity. If your father's rank does not entitle you to the simple title of Honourable without any official excuse for wearing it, there is all the more credit due to yourself in that you have achieved a position any man might be proud to occupy. Like every true son of Rugby, you have a manly English love of manly games. Called to the Bar, you saw in India a wide field for capacity, and even ambition, and your career as practising Barrister, as Advocate-General, as Acting Judge, and yet again as a *pucka* ornament of the Bench, has resulted in your name being very much of a household word throughout the Bombay Presidency. Many brilliant men and many able men strive, and work,

and labour, and achieve fortune and place, and yet miss the best distinction of all that their names are known widely and as widely loved. It is one of the surest signs of a man's real greatness of nature that, without striving for love or popularity, affection and admiration and respect come to him as something of a right, and as something that has been won. Indeed, your work on the Bench has filled the popular imagination so largely that few recollect your career at the Bar, or your work as Advocate-General; yet even while men respect your acumen as a Judge, and give you their confidence as to a man who upholds the lofty traditions of the post you have the honour to fill, it is in your character as a simple true-hearted man,—a man who is a gentleman all through that you are best known and most acceptable to Bombay society. And yet one would think you are more of a club man than a society man. Unlike one of your brethren on the Bench, you do not pretend to a perennial youth, and yet your love to-day for manly pastimes is as keen and fresh as it was thirty years ago. You show youth the best side of sport, and so do not lose anything of authority, or anything of that respect, which will always cling to a man who can lead youth without himself being too youthful. No one would dare to clap you on the back, no one would care to have to reproach himself for forgetting to honour himself by forgetting

to respect you. The difference, then, between yourself and your brother Judge is just that which Polonius drew when he advised his son:—"Be thou familiar but by no means vulgar." A man whose thoughts are high, whose tastes are pure, whose heart is true, and whose instincts are manly, cannot be vulgar himself, or a cause of vulgarity in others. His business is to give occasion to the higher nature of those around him to assert itself, and his greatest reward is in seeing manifestations of what Ouida calls the freedom of manliness in young men with whom the accidents of his life bring him into close communication. Effusiveness is sometimes the effect of shyness, sometimes of vulgarity, and sometimes of a weak and untrained judgment. The difficulty is to be cordial without being effusive on the one hand, and to be cordial without the stiffness of pride on the other: and yet in all true cordiality, there is both effusiveness and pride; but the effusiveness is a compliment, and the pride is self-respect; and in this, which is one of the fine arts of society, you are something of a master. But the feelings which must rule a man in his relations to others before he can be what I have suggested you are, are at the bottom, not only of a man's personal dignity, but of his appreciation of that dignity which belongs to the position he has come, after it may be years of struggle with the world, to worthily occupy. It is a feeling such as this which

guided you in the incident of February last, and made you the champion, not of yourself as Judge, but of the office of Judge as it ought to be maintained in the sight of the people. It would never, again, have happened to you as it happened to Mr. Justice Pinhey in the Mayhew affair. Mr. Mayhew enjoyed the position given by a considérable practice at the Bombay Bar; and with reference to a certain case in which he was engaged, and in which a particular application made by Mr. Mayhew had been refused by Sir Michael Westropp, the Chief Justice, he during the vacation renewed the matter before Mr. Pinhey, who granted that which the Chief Justice had seen cause to deny. After the vacation all Bombay was somewhat amused, somewhat astonished, and perhaps a little indignant, at the spectacle of the Chief Justice convening a Full Bench sitting for the purpose of administering to Mr. Mayhew just about as complete a wigging as ever fell to the lot of a bold Barrister. The point of the matter is, that Mr. Justice Pinhey was present on the Bench, and thus a consenting party to a wigging which involved a special rebuke to himself. Perhaps, your greatest social success was achieved in your character as President of the Byculla Club. And yet success was singularly enough due to other qualities than those which are usually looked for in a President. You did not pretend to oratory; sentimentalities and pure

enthusiasms are foreign to your imagination and to your nature. But if you cannot dash off into the highly enthusiastic nothings of some of our public men, you have a calmness of temper, an evenness of tone, and a fund of ready commonsense which make you invaluable as an adviser, and a pearl amongst friends. It is this which saves you from even the temptation to excess, and which makes you genial without making you an object of anxiety or a source of wild wonderment. If you are a *gourmand*, and if you have something of a weakness to show your knowledge of wines, it is because you consider a gentleman ought to know as well how to live as how to carry himself, or, if necessary, how to defend himself. But if you do not attempt to shine in society, there are, perhaps, reasons for your abstinence which, whilst they are common to men of your stamp of character, which, indeed, appear to such men in the simple light of an ordinary duty, yet command sympathy and unfailing respect, and do much to strengthen all that is best in our social life. Report says that out of the great share madness which seized upon Bombay, you emerged with what appeared to you the duty of husbanding your not over-liberal income in the effort to retrieve something of the losses which it would have been miraculous if at such a time you had escaped. But having said something of your good points, I feel it my duty

to ask if you cannot refrain from gossip. Surely, you can see the mistakes you commit. Gossip, dear sir, is the most dangerous of all games. When a man feels in himself the strength of independence, his unruly tongue becomes a bane and a misfortune to his friends; when a man is weak, his gossip is vicious; and when he is vicious, his gossip is a snare and a means towards fraud. You have the strength of a spirit which loves its own independence, and hence in you gossip becomes, perhaps, the one great weakness of your life, and the one direction in which you show what is, after all, but bad taste. Yet what is bad taste, but—shall I say it—vulgarity. Oh! Mr. Bayley, there is even in gossiping recollections a danger which, I have little doubt, you have occasionally discovered for yourself. I must not forget, in recounting what you have done for Bombay, all that the Gymkhana owes to your wise counsels and to your example. If its members are pleased to consider that it is a model institution of its kind, surely you have so taught them as to provide them with an excellent excuse. For many years, too, you made a most excellent Major of Volunteers; and if you were less successful as Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding the Corps, it was because, in my opinion, such a position can only adequately be filled by a clever, and thoroughly trained, and practical soldier. It would have been well, perhaps, if you

had seen in your nomination as Commandant less of deserved promotion and more of the indifference of Sir James Fergusson for the Volunteer movement in general. Men say of you that the goal of your ambition is to be Chief Justice of the Court in which you have done much honest and much hard work; but then, those who know how to cavil, assert, with some degree of malice, that your decisions are unusually unfortunate on appeal. It may be that this is true. I cannot reconcile myself to believe it. In various great cases, involving the nicest points of native customs and native beliefs, you have exhibited a grasp of facts and a comprehension of necessarily strange customs which could only be the outcome of the most patient and earnest labour, and a large and carefully cultivated intelligence. Whether you would be a good Chief Justice, it is not my province, as it is not my intention, to discuss. If experience is worth anything, if great labour is to be valued, and if the study of the application of English law to native ways and native society be worth promotion, or if they fit a man for promotion, then you are certainly better fitted to preside over a High Court than an ancient old Bailey lawyer, or a moderately successful Equity junior. In conclusion, it was, I venture to say, characteristic alike of the commonsense character of your mind, of your honesty, and of your experience, that you should have

condemned the inexpediency and the unfairness underlying the unaccountable blunder of the Ilbert Bill. And so wishing you, for the sake of your Presidency, the promotion you have so well earned, and the long continuance of that usefulness which seems inseparable from your connection with Indian affairs, I subscribe myself—

Yours faithfully,
SADYK. DOST.

XXVII.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES' METCALFE MACGREGOR, K.C.B., C.S.I., C.I.E., S.C.,

Quartermaster-General in India.

DEAR SIR,—A few weeks ago a large section of your countrymen looked to you as the fittest man for the post of British Commissioner for demarcating the boundary between Afghanistan and the restless Power which since 1863 has advanced from Orenburg to Samarcand, and from Ashourada to Merv. So far as a man's reputation depends upon the work he has done, the expectation was correct; but work alone, no matter how good, will not fit a man to discharge a difficult and delicate task where patience and tact are even more needed than firmness, and where caution must supplement knowledge. I do not by any means say the

selection that has been made is a good one. In fact, you have certain qualities which would make you a bad Boundary Commissioner; but then, Sir Peter Lumsden has certain other qualities which are likely to make him a worse selection than you could possibly have been. Still, your friends must congratulate themselves that you are not on the way to Sarrakhs, no matter how much you would feel yourself at home in the region from which Russian sharp-eyed jealousy and English misplaced courtesy combined to turn you back. About this time next year you will give up a connection with your present department which will then have lasted over twenty years, and the question is—what will become of you? Will you follow the steps of your friend Macpherson, and get an Indian Division, or will you go Home and be lost in the crowd of expectants? You see, Sir Charles, you have really had such very little regimental service that one-half expects the cessation of your career on the Staff will bring about a wind-up of your career altogether. And yet you have quite a full card of war services; you have ever been a brave and studious soldier, with a habit of fighting, and a gift for getting wounded. You lack nothing of the complete natural outfit of a British General, not even the Roman nose, unless it be an intuitive knowledge of men, and the happy knack of drawing the distinction between brusquerie and rudeness, the severity of command and

the carelessness of giving offence. Nature intended you for a fighting-man, and education and habit have made you a soldier. You saw plenty of service of a rough-and-tumble kind during the Mutiny,—service of the kind which betrays a man's aptitudes and the natural bent of his mind. No one in those days could be half an hour with you without perceiving you had an enthusiasm for your profession as rare as it was attractive, and that even then you had made up your mind to leave your mark. From the China war you returned a veteran lieutenant, who had earned a promise of his majority, and who was eager for service, eager to acquire a mastery of his profession, and who did even then possess an acquaintance with war which marked him out as an officer of exceptional promise. The Bhootan dispute required that gunpowder should be burned, and as usual you were in the way of distinction and a stray bullet; and then came the Abyssinian campaign, where you maintained your reputation, and marked yourself out as an officer not lightly to be passed over by those who might have to organise future wars. Ten years of peace matured your judgment without diminishing your love of adventure, and prepared you for the Afghan war by the preparation of the "Turkestan Gazetteer," and by a personal study of Khorassan and Biluchistan. During this interval you steadily added to your repute as a soldier. The

ambitious subaltern of 1864, the silent and speculative dreamer of 1869, had developed into a grumbler whose success scarcely excused his affectation of the preoccupied rudeness of a great commander; and the grumbler by and bye became the keen, yet perhaps over-scientific, Chief of the Staff of the garrison of Cabul. And yet there were few more dashing, more soldierly feats of war done in Afghanistan than your well-conceived and gallantly executed recapture of the guns at Kila Kazi,—guns that Massey had risked to give Sir F. Roberts a chance of getting out of as bad a mess as over-confidence ever created for any commander. The fault which brought on the investment of Sherpore brought on the scene Sir Donald Stewart and his army and his staff. You were the right hand of the other General. Sir Donald had his own men to look after, and so the necessities of some, the wishes of another, and the excuse of your services, brought you to the luck of commanding the Third Brigade of the Army of Vengeance for Maiwand. You were in reserve at Candahar, or I have not the slightest doubt you would have found a hot corner where you could have got wounded; and to make up for the disappointment your Third Brigade was selected to bring the Murrees and their Chief to reason. The irreverent in Afghanistan had discovered a name for you,—I am not addicted to slang, so I shall not let you know what it was,—a name suggestive of undue self-

estimation, undue pretensions, and self-overrated skill. You were not popular and you were not believed in,—indeed, if I may say so, you were, as a matter of fact, somewhat laughed at, somewhat a subject of chaff. There was one General in England; but at Candahar there were two,—the Commander of the Army of Relief and the Commander of the Third Brigade. Ah me! I cannot help thinking it was somewhat funny to see the way you surrounded the Murrees, and advanced upon the astounded tribe by converging columns. It was a touching display of science, a peaceful imitation of the campaign of Koniggratz; but if the Murrees had had stomach for a rush, and had had the art to know which column to envelope, there might have been a new Maiwand to mar the long story of your success. They say you invited the Murree Chief to fight; but even if you did not, it is a thing you might have been expected to do: so the story may pass as sufficiently characteristic of the man. There is a story told of an officer in the Crimea, who went raging and ramping about as if his neighbours were bereft of the gift of toes. He met one day another officer of much superior rank and got well sworn at. The storyteller says he was a more likeable man from that day forward. I am not going to draw any moral; but you must confess, Sir Charles, that you are harder to get on with than even 'het Hielandmen' are as a rule. And yet you can be generous even at great personal risk, and just and fair even in the face of circumstances

which would keep most men quiet. There is to your credit the story how, when in China, you risked being charged with insubordination rather than see a sowar of Fane's Horse flogged, as you thought, unjustly. Your travels in Khorassan betray your love of adventure; but can it be true, that you sought to put down horse-stealing at Peshawar, by assuming the disguise of a syce and leading your horse about as a bait? Happily for all parties, in vain is the trap set in the sight of any Pathan thief. If the story be true, it was the trick of a man to whom personal peril is a pleasurable excitement; but it was not a way to catch any but the most inexperienced of Afridis—if, indeed, there be a man of that tribe who can be called inexperienced. You have sought to vary your military work by literary composition—I can only sympathise with the sorrow which led you, manlike and soldier-like, to a new sphere of labour and public service;—but your writing brings out in a singular manner the rough, decided, inconsiderateness which in your case hides a heart which justifies the verse that—

The bravest are the tenderest.

You are direct and literal in your descriptions, and wholly professional in your aims. If you look across a valley, it is to note whether it supplies any good fighting positions; whilst a glance at its fields reveals to you that it can furnish supplies for such and so many men. So you estimate towns by their strategical value, and travel with a soldier's eyes as busy as if you were

on a serious reconnoissance. Your books have thus an interest of their own, and a worth altogether out of the common. Your travels are, in fact, a continuation of your studies, and a deliberate preparation for service in a field, you seem to believe, will be the theatre of great events in which you are ambitious to take a part. As Quartermaster-General of the Army in India, you have done much good service. You have made the department more practical and more useful, and have done much to make the study of their profession popular amongst the present generation of officers. I know your bravery, your intimate acquaintance with the history of war, your special acquaintance with every theatre where Indian soldiers are likely to be employed; and yet "I hae ma doots" whether you are likely to be so great a General as you habitually believe you will be, You see, there was so much, so too much bookiness about that little Murree affair that I doubt about your practical power. If you can get an early command of a division, and so get into the way of handling troops without thinking of a Kriegspiel, I should have good hopes of you; for a man who can come out of the fiery furnace of the mutual adulation society with such a record of good work as stands against the name of Charles Metcalfe Macgregor, must have within himself possibilities of a very high order.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXVIII.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. COURTNAY PEREGRINE ILBERT, C.I.E.,

Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India.

DEAR SIR,—In addressing a letter to you, I wish in a special manner to be fair, for I recognise that the responsibility for your appointment does not rest with yourself. Ambition becomes great parts, and, by a hackneyed and discredited standard, you are beyond doubt a man of great parts. There is not a man in India—not even your friend Dr. W. W. Hunter—who could hope to live with you in a competitive examination; and yet, although your deliverances in the Legislative Council prove you to possess a simply unlimited capacity for cramming—a capacity which would have caused Wren to hold you up as a pet phenomenon,—you are not a man of great parts. In all that marks the student you are great; in all that marks the statesman, or the man of affairs, you are deficient to a degree which is a puzzle to your opponents and a despair to your friends. I, dear sir, have gone to and fro, and up and down, in India for more than a quarter of a century; and in my journeyings I have known and understood many of those great men who have been devoted by

England to the service of India; but never before have I known any one who presents to a student of men such an interesting incongruity as yourself. To start with, how could an untried man aspire to the great and splendid office you fill? How could the pride of a clique of philosophic Radicals in London, a man whose sympathies were believed to be with the extremists, reconcile himself to take part in that most perfect of all despotisms—the Government of India? How could a man, whose ideas of the rights of the people are so pronounced, abandon himself to be a Minister of the Crown, in an administration in which the people have no part and no right to a part? To understand you in any way at all, I must go back to your Marlborough days. Perhaps, the sweetest moment you have ever known; or ever will know, was when you found yourself the winner of the Baliol Scholarship, and the idol of your school for the moment. There is nothing which makes a man so gracious to himself as the feeling that those amongst whom he has lived have suddenly come into the discovery that they have a right to be proud of him. So it was with you. And yet who did know you—a studious lad, a favourite with his fags because he half ignored them, anything, apparently, but robust, and given to toady the masters who placed their trust in his sapping? You left Marlborough, knowing books well, but you did not know its

boys, nor did they know you, except that your name was a name of strength and a credit to the school. The same thing happened at Oxford. Your reputation was that of a brilliant classical scholar. Your very successes, your first class, were won by the exercise of qualities which removed you from the run of ordinary students—youths who mix with their fellows and whose ambitions are more with men than with books. When you took your Fellowship, it seemed as if Nature had marked you out for a Don, and as if it were your fate to follow the example of him whose niece became your wife. If ever there was a man fitted for an University career by the bent of his faculties, by his want of sympathy with undergraduates, and by the example of learning he could set them, it was yourself. Your University seemed to claim you; you, too, except for your Radicalism, seemed in full career for the Mastership of your College after due and proper probation, when you drifted away, I cannot say into active life, but away from the triumphs of the student into a profession, whose chiefest successes are born of a fine knowledge of human nature, and the application of that knowledge to human affairs. The brilliant scholar became a lawyer,—the man with a bright University career open before him engaged himself in a profession where genius itself can only suceeed on condition of becoming the bondswoman of commonsense. That such a

man when called to the Bar should never practise, goes without speaking. I believe you became a conveyancer, and so entered almost at the outset into Thring's chambers. No wonder that Lord Bramwell should declare at a recent public meeting to discuss the Bengal Tenancy Bill, that, although he thought he knew almost every lawyer of any note, he was altogether unfamiliar with your name, and had never heard of you in your profession. That ignorance, however, is the condition of most people, whether in London or Calcutta. How then did it happen that you came to India? Thring is believed to have recommended you as a successor to Whitley Stokes as Secretary in the department over which you now preside; but you declined to be a subordinate, declined to serve an apprenticeship, and when the chance again came round, recommended by your Radicalism, you became Mr. Stokes' successor in the Supreme Council. Your refusal of the Secretaryship is characteristic of the man. Your belief in yourself is a profound fanaticism. It is like the pride which thought it unworthy to seem proud; and, as a matter of course, because you can master books, secure that they will not answer back; your belief in the sufficiency of mere book knowledge is a stumbling-block to men who have had to subordinate the dead written thoughts to the thoughts that live in action. Between you, dear sir, and the Anglo-Indian community, irrespective of

the divergence caused by your methods, a great gulf is fixed. They have experience, and a practical knowledge of the country, having risen from ignorance dense as your own to knowledge such as you despise, and you prefer to find your India in the pages of a Hunter or a Temple, and in the reports of men not under the rank of a Chief Commissioner. It is told of you that you once enquired of a man who had written to you a diatribe against some official, whether he was certain a much troubled district was in point of fact attached to Bengal. This shows that all knowledge is not wrapped up in the pages of the "Gazetteer of India." Did you not also take all the pleasure out of your voyage to India, by devouring with devoted avidity all the works on India your publisher could recollect to supply you with? And when you had accomplished a feat from which most men would shrink, did you not enunciate the startling theory that so far from having to learn anything of India, you found yourself in a position to teach? Self-appreciation of that kind would be offensive anywhere; in India it is regarded as doubly dangerous, because the very best and wisest of Englishmen who have lived in India, have been those who have confessed how little an Englishman can really know of the working of the native mind. But in all things I am constrained to say you are a failure. A man unused to affairs, unused to those everyday compromises which

are forced upon a statesman, a man fresh from books, or, what is worse, fresh from debating theories more as an intellectual exercise than as a seeking for any end, practical or otherwise, such a man cannot be thrust into a great position, into the daily exercise of great power, without injustice to himself and mischief to those in whose affairs he must intermeddle. Any man in your place, with your antecedents, would fail, for not even genius can invent experience ; and in India genius without experience means the reign of anarchy. But you, besides experience, lack the statesman's temper and gifts. You are worse than lacking in tact, though you can be pleasant enough when, like Macaulay, there is no other lion near. You say offensive things in the belief that they are in some way complimentary, or a sort of tribute on your part. Who but yourself at an Oxford and Cambridge dinner would have professed to be ignorant of the very locality of Cambridge ? I entirely acquit you of any intention of being rude or discourteous. Your immaturity of worldly knowledge was alone to blame. Then, again, where in India will one hear such singular views as in your drawing-room ; where find such a unique absence of all appreciation of the difference between the English working-men and the products of the most peculiar social system in the world ? These things do not make for popularity or for confidence. They provoke curiosity and wonder, some

contempt, and much alarm. If you have failed, it is because your methods have been those of a man who regards the caucus as the only political machine worth admiration. You have not understood India, and hence have not realised what agitation here may mean. Fie, dear sir, fie, what have a people who could use the *chapaties* in 1857 to learn even from a disciple of Chamberlain? Remember that the secret of the *chapaties* is a secret to this day—a dead secret too. Any man who could dream of wire-pulling in India will never be of India, no matter how long he may be in India. Any man who could dream of insinuating that two meanings could be placed on the Concordat about the Bill which has stigmatised your name, will never learn the wisdom which can see in Anglo-Indians the necessary leaders of the people of India. Any man who can invent an Afghan policy for himself, and take pride in the fact that only one other believes in it save himself, is a man hopelessly incapable of being even a great official. How Sir C. Aitchison must have smiled at the idea of his sharing your views,—he who elaborated "masterly inactivity" at a time when you at Marlborough divided your hopes between tips and scholarships. Verily, as I have said, your appreciation of yourself is a fanaticism so robust as to be incapable of being indented. To attempt to comprehend the many contradictory phases in which you present yourself would only lead me to a

quarter-of-an-hour of confusion. You are learned and brilliant, a man who knows men from books, and yet I have seen a correspondence which for simplicity and petulance might have been conducted by a little lady of twelve. What is it that makes you such a Radical in words, such a despot as an official? Can it be a protest against the concatenation of aristocracy involved in your name? If this be so, then your godfathers and godmothers have to answer for much, very much. I have heard you called a prig, but I should not apply the epithet to you. A prig is an ordinary man eaten up with a belief in himself. You might have been a prig at Oxford, or among your Radical friends in London; but in India you are simply a mistake, and may be a blunder. You are an Anglo-Indian so highly placed as to be beyond the chance of learning India, an official without training, a statesman without experience, a legislator who has never practised law, and a man of the world whose knowledge of men and views of life are confined to books. That a man of your antecedents and views can be sent to hold one of the highest offices under the Crown in this country is a proof—I wish it were not so—of how little the interests of India weigh with those to whom her destinies have been committed.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXIX.

TO LIEUT.-GENERAL THE HONORABLE THOMAS FOURNESS WILSON, C.B., C.I.E., S.C.,

Military Member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

DEAR SIR,—Although you have not a long list of brilliant deeds to make your name remembered by your countrymen in India, still that name will be kept in cherished recollection as that of a man who kept alive, and kept undimmed, the splendid traditions of honour, loyalty, and steadfastness of an older generation, of men who were great, who lived in a famous time, and who wrought heroically for England. There is a manly honesty which in a crisis is better than great talents, or brilliant attainments,—honesty which makes him who possesses it wise to understand popular feeling, and to discriminate between that which is practicable and that which is utopian. You did not spare Anglo-Indians so far as their faults in your eyes were concerned; but you took the high ground of the weal of the Empire, and the paramount necessity of avoiding as far as possible that letting out of bitter waters involved in the discussion of race questions; and, having formed your opinion, having convinced yourself that India demanded

peace and not unrest, you were simply and honestly consistent. In this attitude, which became you well, men recognised the spirit of those sepoy officers whose pride it was to understand their men, and to know the requirements of the splendid heritage which it has fallen to England to possess. What else could be expected from a man who had stood by the side of Sir Henry Lawrence in the stress of the rising tide of the Mutiny, and upon whom fell no little of the burden of those marvellous preparations which enabled the garrison of Lucknow to resist for five months the utmost efforts of an army, a city, and a province, leagued together for their destruction. That seems to us a far away time—of that struggle time has so dulled the echoes that few bear in mind the fierce anxiety, the conquering pride, which filled all hearts and banished every thought of defeat; and yet when you joined Sir Henry Lawrence's staff as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, you were a Lieutenant with nineteen years' service, had chased Boondelas whilst your comrades were winning fame in Afghanistan, and had taken part in the mighty struggle which at Goojerat broke for ever the power of the Khalsa. You were a gay party in the old 13th,—yourself, Peter Wade, and Gastrell. You are almost the only man in India who can recollect anything of the days when Cadets astonished the rustic mind at Baraset,—almost the only man I can now call to

mind who can look back upon nearly half a century of service to India. Between 1838 and 1884 there is more than the mere lapse of years. In that interval the Empire was completed, was rudely shaken into ruins, and was rebuilt in a new and more enduring form by the strong hands of your friends and comrades. But even greater than the political changes have been the changes brought by railways, the expansion of trade, settled laws, and the sense of being freemen born to enjoy an undisturbed peace, felt by the natives of the new generation. You can tell capital stories of the days when all movement was a march. The difference may, perhaps, impress itself upon you too strongly, and may lead you to put too high a strategical value upon railways, in the sense that you may overlook the chance of their being interrupted or torn up. The new generation can scarcely realise the fact that when you entered the service of the Company, its army numbered in the three Presidencies nearly 320,000 men, and that this immense force could get together a strength equal to an Army Corps with far less readiness than can now be accomplished with about half the then total strength of India. It may be—indeed, I am afraid it is so—that this new facility of movement within India has, to some extent, blinded you to the military needs of the country, and has led you to overrate the efficiency of the new army and its new weapons in a way which has caused

you to neglect the warning of men like Sir William Mansfield, Lord Napier of Magdala, General Haines, and Sir Henry Lawrence. Only in this way can I account to myself for your lending the weight of your great experience to the reduction, two years ago, of the Indian forces. It is an axiom that no power can disarm without provoking a rival to activity. Russia has found her opportunities in the unceasing effort of Indian administrations since 1862 to cut down the military expenditure. Yet that expenditure must have an irrepressible growth so long as the so-called Staff Corps exists. If you had realised the vast political consequences hanging upon the last reduction of the army of India, I am assured no power of persuasion would have induced you to yield your consent to so immense a blunder. The effort of the Government was directed to economy at any price, with the result that whatever savings were effected will be more than absorbed in the expenses of the Afghan Frontier Commission, that the army is dissatisfied and made to feel itself a financial scapegoat, and that the recruiting classes are disenchanted of military service. In the somewhat flat and obscure atmosphere of the Executive Council, there is not much room for a military man to make his mark. He cannot overcome the mischief of the Staff Corps, because he cannot abolish it and begin over again with a keener perception of the interests of the country as

contrasted with the claims of army officers; he cannot attempt large reforms, for the Financial Department is as a lion that awaketh at the sound of the word military reform; he cannot endow India with arsenals of her own, or keep abreast of modern discoveries in military science, because, besides aggravating Sir Auckland Colvin, such a course would exasperate Lord Kimberley, and all the clique of selfishnesses he has for party purposes to satisfy. But though cabbined, cribbed, and confined, the Military Member of Council can do much for the army, and all that could be done you have done. More than this, your soldierly common-sense has on many occasions saved the Government from the peril of unchecked extremes; you have been a strength to the administration, for you have kept an unloosening hold upon public confidence; and for your sake much has been forgiven, and trust has been reposed where suspicion else would have ripened into utter condemnation and a dead-lock. To those who know your story, and something of the sorrow of your youth, the way you bear yourself in your age is not without nobleness. You may not, General, take a first rank in the list of Indian worthies, but all who love England will wish for her no better fortune than this, that when she may be again tried in the fierce furnace of war, or calamity, when troubles may gather about her, and the path before her feet grow dark with the shadows of

struggling nations, she may find as gallant a spirit, as sound a judgment, and as true a heart as yours on which to trust.

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

XXX.

TO GEORGE WILLIAM ALLEN, ESQ., C.I.E.

MY DEAR MR. ALLEN,—A business man first, and above all a business man. You have a natural aptitude for business, which resembles an instinct rather than a trained faculty, and the curious thing about you is, that this instinct is perpetually at war in your nature with a great variety of other instincts, tastes, and aptitudes equally powerful and equally enduring. Your keen business perceptions are always impelling you into lines of action—into projects, and speculations, which entail on you a mode of life, for which you are thoroughly qualified, but for which you have something very like an aversion. This may be due to some extent to physical, as well as to moral, causes. You are somewhat dyspeptic. Mallock's query—"Is life worth living?"—is often on your lips; and often, I believe, not very far from your heart. If life is worth living, the best possibility connected with it is, according to you, a life of cultured tranquillity, and that is precisely the mode of life you

have never been able to enjoy except at intervals, and which, as you imagine, has been denied to you by the very irony of fate. But this is, to a great extent, a delusion. The fact which you regard as a calamity—that you are now in India instead of being at Florence, Nice, or Homburgh—is due quite as much to certain peculiarities of your own temperament as it is to any necessities of your position as an Anglo-Indian capitalist and speculator. And that is one of the misfortunes of possessing a speculative temperament. About five years ago, you tried to disengage yourself from India; and when you left this country at that time, I believe you had little or no intention of returning to it. You intended to pass the rest of your days in England and on the Continent, and that India should become to you a dream of the past with distant memories of a portion of your life for ever passed away. But you are back in India, you have been in India for some time; and if you leave India again, I venture to predict that you will return to it, and, not impossibly, end your days in the East. To yourself the explanation of all this is the simplest thing possible. Business obligations—the obligation of looking after your estates in Oudh—of watching over the interests of your great army boot contract—have drawn you perforce to a country which you had meant to quit for ever. And this explanation is partly true, but only partly. The truth is, that the

experiences of the last ten years of your life in India before you quitted it five years ago, were such as very few men except yourself could have commanded, and they had given Anglo-Indian life a hold upon your affections, the strength of which you never realised until you tried to sever your connection with those experiences for ever.

The grand turning point in your career was, of course, the establishment of the *Pioneer* in 1865. The opportunity for the establishment of a first class daily paper in the N. W. P. presented itself, and you availed yourself of it with characteristic promptitude and energy. Lang, of the *Mofussilite*, had just died. Gordon, of the *Lahore Chronicle*, was not, I think, dead at the time, but he had practically retired from journalism, and Iltudus Pritchard was doing what lay in him to alienate the services from the old *Delhi* by pursuing a line of policy and criticism which is now most prominently represented in journalism by the Calcutta *Statesman*. The philosophy of that criticism consists in believing that every Government official is committed by the obligations of his position to the congenial duty of oppressing the people, and afterwards of manufacturing statistics to prove that they are not oppressed. All new journals are started to supply a want; but when the *Pioneer* appeared, this want was apparent, its existence undeniable. Calcutta had several good dailies and several good men connected with them,—Job Saunders (the elder), Samuel Clarke, James Furrell

Captain Fenwick, Dr. O'Callaghan,—but the circulation of the Calcutta papers was, for the most part, confined to Bengal, and the N. W. P. was left to the tender mercies of a few journals which had outlived both their popularity and their efficiency. You were fortunate in your choice of the moment,—you were still more fortunate in your choice of the man. By the man I mean the first Editor. You thought—and rightly thought—that Anglo-Indian experience ought to be regarded as one of the most essential qualifications in an Anglo-Indian Editor. The Rev. Julian Robinson was appointed, and in one important direction it may be said with truth that Robinson made the *Pioneer*. In addition to being a powerful and fertile writer, Robinson possessed social qualifications which may have been equalled, but which were certainly not surpassed, by those of any social celebrity of the time. And those were days when social celebrity went further, and counted for more than it does now. The great diners-out, the celebrated after-dinner *raconteurs*, the brilliant amateur actors were known from one end of India to the other. I can recall them from every Presidency,—Crossman, Fenwick, Arthur Crawford, Anstey, Fred. Cooper, Teddy Oakes, Robert Spankie, D. B. Smith,—a few names at random from the gilded youth of that brilliant time. And Robinson could hold his own with the best of them. As a writer in the *Friend of India*, he had earned a great reputation for literary

ability, and his articles on political and administrative questions were among the best which ever appeared in the old Serampore weekly. In England, an Editor is a man who may be known well enough within the limits of a literary or political coterie ; but, as a rule, he is not even a name to the outside public—that public on which his journal must depend for support ; in India it is very different. The personality of an Editor forms, as it were, an integral part of the reputation of the journal which he conducts, and the wit, experience, and great social powers of Julian Robinson were always a tower of strength to the *Pioneer*. Robinson was succeeded by Sinnett in 1872. Sinnett was, in some respects, greatly superior, and in others, greatly inferior, to Robinson. He was an out-and-out Conservative—an earnest and ardent politician,—and Anglo-Indian public feeling has always been, and will always remain, very conservative indeed. He was at once more cautious and more vigilant than Robinson, and there was an element of certainty in the *Pioneer* under Sinnett's management, and even sustained efficiency, which is the soul of effective journalism. The free lances of the pen received very little encouragement from Sinnett, but still he should be credited with perhaps the very best *jeu d' esprit* which ever appeared in an Anglo-Indian Journal—Phil Robinson's Man Eating Tree of Madagascar. But, my dear Mr. Allen, in connection with the origin of the

Pioneer, you made, from my point of view, one serious mistake. You started the paper as a Company, and your brother-shareholders failed to recognise what you saw plainly—that the paper to be a success must overwhelm and entirely throw into the shade, not simply compete with existing journals in the North-Western Provinces. They thwarted you at every turn; they shrank from the liberal, even lavish outlay, which you knew to be necessary if the paper was to be a success, and you became disheartened and disgusted. And then (peace to his ashes, for a better fellow never breathed) your first Business Manager, William Cockell, was not a good business man. Outstandings were allowed to accumulate to an enormous extent, and the paper, during the first year or even two years of its existence, was anything but a financial success, although it continued under Robinson's able guidance to make steady headway as an organ of public opinion. Most of your brother-shareholders—a most fortunate thing in the future interests of the *Pioneer* — became alarmed. They consented to make over to you the shares they possessed at par, or a small premium; and they believed this to be much above their value at the time, and you became in time the sole proprietor of the *Pioneer*. You secured Mr. McCarthy, the successor of William Cockell, one of the best business men in the Upper Provinces. The outstandings were gathered in; the

circulation of the paper increased every day. Robinson gathered round him whatever there was of wit, learning, genius, and sound and well-informed official opinion, in the North-Western Provinces, and the *Pioneer* became one of the leading journals of India. To what extent your tact, energy, your lavish yet judicious liberality contributed to the result is only known to those who were behind the scenes when the *Pioneer* passed triumphantly through a very critical period of its newspaper existence. Just as the paper had been rescued from all its difficulties, McCarthy died a victim to overzeal and overwork, and in him you lost one of the ablest and most devoted lieutenants you ever had.

I have already alluded to the self-delusion which makes it possible for you to think that your life—the ideal life you would really wish to lead—is a life far away from India—in the European centres of art and fashions—"the ampler ether"—the "diviner air" of London, Paris, or Rome. You gave that life a pretty long trial, and when you retired to India, you persuaded yourself that you did so owing to business engagements and the requirements of business obligations. But the truth is, that India had a far stronger hold on you than you dreamed of, or than you thought possible when you came to the conclusion that you would like to quit it for ever. We are what we are. Let any man have lived in India for upwards of twenty years—let any

man have enjoyed life in India as you were able to enjoy it,—Simla in the hot weather—Allahabad in the cold—ample means—troops of friends,—and then let that man go Home as you did to settle down contentedly to Home ways and Home circumstances—and it is certain that nothing in Home life will compensate him for what he has lost, and that he will often look back with a sigh to that life which, as he imagined, he could quit and had quitted without a single regret. Everything that makes life dear to us in the retrospect—and as we grow older we live more and more in the past—those traditions, memories, and associations of the best part of a lifetime are closely and vividly connected with the one life, and only faintly and distantly with the other. This is a fact—a melancholy fact—which experience alone can realise to us, and too often for most of us that experience comes too late.

You are not now the proprietor of the *Pioneer*; though you do possess some interest in the paper. The paper was so long identified with your name—you did so much commercially and socially to make it what it is—that it should be permanently associated with the history and memory of your career in this country. That career is, I believe, drawing to a close. I have spoken of you throughout as Allen of the *Pioneer* in connection with the greatest and most successful enterprise of your life. In a review of this description the

acerbities too often generated in the heat and conflict of political discussion should have no place. There is room enough for all of us. All honourably conducted journals are engaged in work in which all their honourably conducted contemporaries are co-operators, not rivals. Nor is it possible for Sadyk Dost to lift a fratricidal hand against the founder of the *Pioneer*.

But there were certain phases and incidents of your public career which I never entirely approved, and you held certain views in connection with newspaper administration in which I could never entirely coincide. It is not to be denied that a great portion of your success as Ambassador for the *Pioneer* at the head-quarters of the Government of India was due to your personal popularity with the Stracheys and Lord Mayo. There was no Press Commissioner in those days, and newspapers had to rely on themselves in connection with the process of obtaining the earliest news. You obtained the earliest and most authentic news for the *Pioneer*, but you paid rather dearly for it. During the Strachey-cum-Mayo *regime*, there were two *Government Gazettes* published at Allahabad—one was called the *Gazette*, the other the *Pioneer*. What a commerce went on in those days when you got and you gave; how you were crammed with facts and the Stracheys with adulation.

According to you, it is one of the functions of an *English* newspaper in India to support the Government,

having regard to all the conditions and circumstances of our rule in this country. In this you are partly right. The Indian Government has a claim on the loyal support and sympathy of every loyal Englishman in India; but that support should be an independent support, and should not be extended to the indiscriminate advocacy of Government measures, because they are Government measures. What the *Pioneer* gained in superiority of information, it lost in influence as an independent organ of public opinion.

Will you again sever your connection with India, only again to find that you "drag at each remove a lengthening chain,"—a chain of memories, associations, feelings, most of them bright enough, but some, for your life, has not been without its great sorrow, impeachable for sadness. It is a pity, I repeat, that you should leave India except as the proprietor of the great journal which will be always associated with your name, and of which you were so deservedly proud, and by all the early supporters of which you will always be long gratefully and affectionately remembered as George W. Allen of the *Pioneer*.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXXI.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE R. GREAVES, C.B., K.C.M.G.

DEAR SIR GEORGE,—Although accustomed to set a high value on yourself, you may yet be surprised at finding your name included among the eminent men of India. I confess to having had no intention of addressing you until the Commander-in-Chief, in a General Order concerning you directed to the Army in India, spoke of the "high office" you had filled during the past five years. That description of your relation to India tickled my fancy, and I incontinently connected in my mind's eye the "high office" and yourself, and smiled somewhat at the merry conceit of the Commander-in-Chief. You are a good example of the success that may be achieved in the Army by a fair amount of money, a good deal of bluster, and average ability. When, thirty-five years ago, you commenced your military career as an Ensign in the 70th Regiment, your prospects were not brilliant; you had then neither money nor patronage to help you on; but you had energy and the instincts of a soldier; and when, on active service on the North-Western Frontier of India, Major-General T. Wright, C.B., wanted a smart young

officer to fill a subordinate post on his staff, he selected you. You did well; and that was your first step on the ladder of staff employment. After such a fortunate beginning, there came to you both money and promotion. You went to New Zealand with your regiment, but did not serve with it during the war; you got work given you on the staff, and your luck was illustrated by two brevets. Then, from January 1862 to October 1884—twenty-two years—you have been continuously on staff duty—a life that has not been good for you. I think if you had done more regimental duty—you have done none since you were a Captain—it would have been better both for yourself and the Service. You have become a noisy, boastful, and rather quarrelsome man—a man to be avoided by quiet people. You are now a teetotaller, yet you have the bad taste to be proud of telling people how much you used to drink a day—an enormous quantity. You did not unfortunately relinquish noisiness with drink: perhaps, you had lived with some one who was deaf; but, any way, you resemble a loudly blown and irrepressible French horn in the midst of a feeble band. I wish that I could take the kindly view which the Commander-in-Chief has adopted in his farewell General Order on your tour of service of Adjutant-General; but I am with some reluctance obliged to confess that that order is a wordy mass of nonsense. Sir Donald Stewart,

for example, was not Commander-in-Chief in India at the period mentioned; neither he, nor you, had anything to do with the fighting at Maiwand and Candahar; nor had you any connection with the blundering battle at Ahmed Kheyl. For five years you have had a peaceful and, in military concerns, an uneventful life in India, passed chiefly at Simla, and with no "grave questions of Army Administration" to encumber your desk and interfere with the eternal lawn-tennis, with your shooting and fishing, your visits to and from the Rockcliff Hotel, and so forth;—a Mashery kind of life which you diversified by quarrels with the Commander-in-Chief's Military Secretary, and squabbles with Departments generally. Any grave questions that did arise were quite beyond your ken, and were considered and decided, whether for good or evil, by the Military Member of Council without reference to your "high office." Since the war in New Zealand, you have seen no real fighting, not even of the kind recorded in "The Last of the Mohicans;" yet in your war services you dignify with the grand name of "battles" the skirmishes with naked savages in Ashanti,—a weakness quite in the style of your friend and patron—Lord Wolseley. It is true that you are decorated with the K.C.M.G., but why this is so, even you do not care to own. After the peaceful occupation of Cyprus in 1878, when you served on the staff in that

Island, you came to India to fill the "high office" of Adjutant-General, and you thought it immensely hard that Major-General MacGregor and other officers, who had been fighting for three years in Afghanistan, should be Sir This and Sir That, whilst you remained merely plain Greaves; you therefore, not being overpowered with bashfulness, told your friends at the Horse Guards that you would also like a Star and a title. It was rather a difficult matter to arrange, for a MacGregor was one sort, and a Greaves another sort, of soldier. However, the Colonial Office was persuaded to come to the rescue, and, in consideration of your splendid services in Cyprus, you were made, in 1881, a K. C. M. G., although in 1879, in the Cyprus distribution, you were not thought worthy of a C. M. G. Your long and continued absence from regimental duty has unfitted you for forming correct opinions on modern regimental matters; all your ideas are now formed from knowledge gained at second-hand; and it is problematical whether, if called upon suddenly, you could, to-day, drill a battalion. You are indeed a true Wolseleyite, and have learned under that politic officer the value of cheap swagger and impudent bluster. With age and rank these faults are more likely to increase than decrease,—an unfortunate prospect, considering that very shortly you may command a division in this country. It would be of advantage to you and the Service if employment

could be found for you in England, before returning to India; you might then learn, perhaps, how to behave in society, to be less boisterous and self-asserting. All really great soldiers have been, and are, modest men, but modest, I fear, you can never be. The Commander-in-Chief, without any good authority for so bold an assertion, has published, in the name of the Army in India, that in you that Army possesses "a true friend and genial comrade," thus exposing his ignorance of the feeling of the Army. You care nothing in particular about the Army in India, and that Army cares nothing in particular about you; it has hardly seen you, or Sir Donald Stewart either, since you assumed your "high office," and he became Commander-in-Chief. You like, or affect to like, India, because, in this benighted land you were, by virtue of your "high office," a somebody, whereas elsewhere you would be with considerable severity a nobody. In India you could bluster, swagger, and make love in a way impossible in England, outside of those very limited localities the refuge of down-trodden nations, and the capital of Bohemia. You surrounded yourself with a small but admiring circle of male and female toadies, and that circle represented your India. The general tone of Simla society has certainly not profited by the five summers you have passed there. Money, "high office," a title, and a Star—no matter how the latter may have been obtained

—are four very good baits, your fifty-three years and not very prepossessing appearance and manners notwithstanding. So far as society is concerned, you chose to bluff the world, and that you were successful is due less to your audacity, less to so gross a fault in one so high in office, than to the fact that, during your career of cynic indifference, society has been practically without a head. My dear Sir George, in the days of Lord Mayo you would have been impossible; even Lord Northbrook would have made you stand at 'attention;' but, luckily for you, times have changed, and you have a ridiculous G. O. all to yourself. If I do not congratulate you, put it down to crabbedness. As Adjutant-General, a good deal of the patronage of the Army has been in your hands, and the leaning you have always shown to your own service has done a great deal towards reviving the old jealousy which subsisted between the European and Native Armies. A distinguished officer of the latter service described to me his first and last official visit of courtesy to yourself. He was not an office-seeker, and merely wished to pay his respects to so great a Mandarin as the Adjutant-General. Somewhat to his surprise, he was greeted with—the habitual "Well, and what do you want?" He explained the object of his visit, and in your exuberance at not having to provide for him, you metaphorically took him to your bosom, and forthwith, with characteristic

gusto, related the last *risque* story you had seen in the "Pink 'un." I believe you are also responsible for exacting blackmail from the Press in favour of a subordinate, who is credited, to his misfortune, with having carried on the greater part of the routine duty of your office. With your sanction, and subject to your approval, this *protégé*, in direct contravention of the orders of the Government of India, became established as a kind of Military Press Commissioner, furnishing certain newspapers, which paid him, with military news in advance of its publication in General Orders. He was by this means enabled to improve his salary, and you were relieved from even the occasional visits which Press correspondents formerly paid to your office in Chota Simla. Now, Sir George, I bid you farewell, and especially do I bid you *bon voyage*, for I trust that for your own sake as well as for that of the Army in this country, it will be long before you return to us, to shikar, after your fashion, in the happy hunting-grounds of India.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXXII.

To JOHN BEAMES, Esq., C.S.,

Commissioner, Burdwan Division.

DEAR MR. BEAMES,—A paradox—a human paradox—through every ramification of a curiously ramified and complicated nature; an extremely clever man without being an able man in proportion to your undoubted astuteness; a great scholar in the technical sense of the word without being a thinker or philosopher in proportion to your undoubted attainments; an excellent boon companion, so far as wit, vivacity, and wonderful conversational powers are concerned, without a spark of that natural geniality which is the soul of good companionship, and without which the most brilliant powers are as the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal; a self-absorbed man, without being in any vicious or culpable sense of the word a selfish man—a man who could know something of everything if he knew anything of human nature—a man who would be one of the greatest men in the country if he were not in some respects one of the least.

You are, and you are not, a Haileybury man. You came to India from the Haileybury College, but you gained admittance to Haileybury as the result of com-

petition among the students of a public school, and not in the usual way, by selection and nomination. The other day I had to bewail in these columns the approaching advent of that time when the Haileybury Civilian would be an extinct species, and when the lay of the last Haileybury man would have to be sung in undying verse by Mr. Trego Webb, or some other of the more eminent Anglo-Indian bards of our time. No such requiem need be sung over you, or the type of official humanity which you embody and represent. You are, although a Haileybury man, the very type of the competition-wallah at his best—and worst. You are made for conflict. Your game is essentially aggressive. Few men in controversy have given or received harder knocks than you have. You have never been a successful administrator in the sense that, practically speaking, your district has never been well administered. But here I speak very relatively indeed. I do not mean to say, or imply, that your district or division is badly administered. By no means—your grasp, insight, experience, energy would render that entirely impossible. But sound and comprehensive administration is not attained through either the perceptions or by means of the exertions of any single individual, however able and accomplished that single individual may be. A highly placed executive official must work through his subordinates, and his object ought to be to utilise his agents, to

work with them cordially, and to get as much out of them as possible. This is not your method; you have no patience with men who are not as able and experienced as yourself; you ride roughshod over your subordinates—and what is the result? You are probably more inefficiently served than any Commissioner in the Service. You have no imagination and no tact; you are, as a rule, absolutely unconscious of the fact that your fierce censures, your scathing rebukes, are in any degree hurtful to the feelings of those who have to work with you, and by whom, as a rule, you are most cordially disliked, although I am willing to admit that of late years you have shown a marvellous improvement in this respect. In the morning you would lacerate a man's feelings with a scathing wigging; you would hand him up—and hand him in a report calculated to do him the most permanent official injury—and in the evening you would ask him to dine, and treat him as your guest in the most kindly and hospitable manner possible, that is, if he accepted your invitation. But sometimes the poor wretch would turn sulky, take refuge in his dignity, and refuse. Then, you were puzzled, honestly puzzled. What could it mean? Was he ill? No. For you were with him in the morning. Had he received bad news from home? No, because no mail had arrived since. You had last met him on terms of perfect cordiality. What *could* it mean?

Then, some one would hint that it *might* be in consequence of that report to Government of which you had sent him a copy, and which might have had the effect of hurting his feelings. Then would come your stentorian—"*impossible;* why, that was *official,* sir. When I was a subordinate, sir, I handed up my *superior* for inefficiency. He handed me up for gross insubordination. While the case was before Government, we dined together every night, and when the Government ordered that we should be separated, we both shed tears when it came to the time of parting." But, as a matter of fact, you have probably never injured a human being in your—that is, officially speaking—in your whole life With the best intentions, you have not been a successful man in this line. The Government know you a great deal too well for that. Most men who have fallen under your displeasure have been promoted, and some men who were at one time compelled to receive wiggings at your hands are now in a position to wig you. There is not a particle of malignity in your nature. Your indifference to the feelings of others arises, not from ill-nature, but from sheer insensibility. So far as your lights go, you are a kind and sympathetic man; but, then, your lights are very dim indeed. You try to read the broad page which contains the history of human nature by the light of a farthing dip. As a philological scholar you have earned a European reputation, and

there can be no question that you would be one of the greatest living philologists if your appreciation of the poetry bore any proportion to your knowledge of the history of language. Here, again, the defects of your character are the defects of your scholarship. In the more remote region of philological inquiry, the gift of construction and imagination plays a supreme part, and you are wholly deficient in imagination. You seize on a word, and worry it as a dog worries a bone, to get at its original derivations, antecedents, modifications, but never attempt, like Max Müller, to track a philological suggestion to its inmost cell, and to follow a word through all the delicate shades of thought, feeling, and emotion which the history of that word carries with it for the keen and delicate observer. If you were a botanist, you would have made a splendid collection of specimens, but they would be all crushed to pieces in the packing. You have many enemies, and your really great abilities have been tardily admitted and grudgingly allowed. But the prejudice and bitterness of feeling, so long associated with your name, is gradually passing away. You have grown with advancing years more moderate, more statesmanlike, and more charitable, and your admirers have grown more numerous and more appreciative. If you can serve on until you are about eighty, it is almost certain that you will end your days as a popular man. Your brother Civilians might even

give you a dinner. But in the meantime you are learning the lesson that no man—no matter how able and intellectual he may be—can afford to cause himself to be misunderstood.

Yours faithfully,
SADYK DOST.

XXXIII.

TO J. J. J. KESWICK, ESQ.,

President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and President of the European and Anglo-Indian Defence Association.

DEAR MR. KESWICK,—When you were a sturdy boy, not over-fond of school, but passionately fond of mischief, few of the sober-minded and earnest-hearted dwellers by the Solway Firth thought that you would one day champion your countrymen in a far-off land, and win a respect and popularity never before given in India to a chief of the non-official classes. They knew from your connection with that Mr. Jardine, who may be said to have been the father of the great house of which you are the Indian representative, that commerce would claim you for its own; but they did not fail to recognise the gift in your mental and physical composition, or fail to see the singular promise your manliness and that of your

brothers held forth. Those brothers are now each in his own sphere fulfilling duties to the communities amongst whom their lot has been cast, only less important, less critical, than those which have fallen into your own hands, as the right of the worthiest and most thoroughly English-hearted representative of Englishmen in India. Some men are born in the purple of rank; you were born with a duty to the trade of your country, and, after a probation in London, where you chiefly distinguished yourself by your painstaking and your great power of work, you came to India to rise by dint of service, not only to the head of the famous house of Jardine, Skinner & Co., but to the leadership of your fellow merchants as President of the Chamber of Commerce. Commerce has not, however, altogether absorbed your attention. You are known as a thorough sportsman, fair and honest, and manly, who loves sport for its own sake, and who has been a mighty prop to true sport, not only in Calcutta, but wherever in India a just decision has been needed to keep things straight. As chief of the mercantile community, you have had the good fortune to render India special service in connection with questions of railways, of improvements in the port of Calcutta, in settling mercantile usages, in securing a practical beginning of the Dock scheme, and in many minor matters where a wide experience and an acute though calm judgment were needed; and if

at times the strength of your nature asserted itself in impatience or in good-tempered brusquerie, you always managed to avoid giving sharp offence. It thus happened that wholly, without intending it, you grew gradually into an unconfessed leadership, which only needed occasion to be accepted as freely as any political chiefship ever was at Home. That occasion came with the introduction of the Ilbert Bill. You who know all classes of your countrymen in India, who are familiar with all shades of planters, who know the natives, and who know also the peculiarities, the difficulties, the perils, and the responsibilities of Mofussil life,—you who have had an all-round experience causing you to assimilate the opinions and experience of many men, saw at once the fatal error of the Government, the mischief involved in the rashness of the proposal, and the evils which would spring from a general recognition by Englishmen of the since admitted fact, that whilst Englishmen had been jealously kept in the dark, natives had been sedulously consulted on a question of English birthright. That you should step at once into the front rank did not surprise any one, except, perhaps, yourself. You have experience, judgment, a fine presence, an English way, as well as an English heart, you can be grandly earnest, strong in defence of the right, and yet you never lose your head; your judgment governs your feelings; you prefer to obtain what is possible rather

than to strive for some extreme end; and under all circumstances you are certain to treat your opponents with that rarest courtesy, a manly fairness, which, whilst it will not parley with their errors, will yet recognise, unless you are forced to believe the contrary, that they ought to be treated as if they were honest in their contentions. With such qualities for leadership, it is no wonder your countrymen soon learned to think of you as "the uncrowned King," the man who represented all that is best in themselves, and in whose hands their interests and those of England were safe. India owes you no small debt of gratitude, in that, having the power to stir up a strife, the character and end of which no man might forecast, you strenuously asserted the English side of the question presented to you, and would not let a mischievous controversy develop into an open and disastrous conflict of race. By and bye, when men's minds are cooler, the full significance of this service will grow upon the admiration of your countrymen and upon the respect of the natives. You gave no countenance to race-hatreds or to embittered prejudices; your put the blame, not upon the natives, but, where it was due, on a feeble Government, dominated by a solitary and lonely dreamer to whom the strangeness and distinctiveness of India were facts unrecognised and unappreciated. Of you personally no native has to complain. Few men have more native friends,

and fewer still have retained such friendships during the fierce storm which has so strained and tried the mutual relations of Englishmen and natives. You are in your everyday connection with the natives what every Englishman ought to be,—the natural leader, the experienced guide, and, if need be, the champion and defender; and if you have led your countrymen with a strong hand, and guided them through a great contest with a high heart, unflinching and steady in courage as well as purposes, it is because you have ever present to your mind the true position of Englishmen in India, and their true value to this country, as those who have wrought out her redemption from barbarism, and who alone can secure for her her right place amongst civilised empires. It is because England never had a truer son that India will yet recognise that she has never had a truer servant. You have made it necessary for the natives to raise themselves, because you have made it impossible for your countrymen to be degraded from their rights as free men, or their duties as the pioneers of the progress and prosperity of India.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXXIV.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL THE HONOURABLE ARTHUR E. HARDINGE, C.B.,

Colonel of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Bombay Presidency.

SIR,—I feel honoured that my self-imposed duty necessitates my addressing you, who, without possessing a life-long record of Indian service, are still one of the foremost of this generation of Anglo-Indians. From the early age of sixteen yours has been a life of active usefulness and of devotion to duty. Hardly had you donned the uniform of the 41st Regiment, when you left your home to join the personal staff at Calcutta of one of the most gallant and distinguished officers the Army has ever known, your father. Those were times of strong thoughts and high deeds; you had little leisure given you ere you found yourself on the skirts of the Punjab and with the army of the Sutlej facing the strength of the Khalsa. Nor had you long to wait for your baptism of fire; you received that from the Sikh guns in front of Moodkee, with your father, the Governor-General of India, and General Sir Hugh Gough, the Commander-in-Chief in India, for your

sponsors. The Army on that day saw reflected in the son the military virtue of the father, the Peninsular veteran. The father too had reason to be proud of his "little Arthur." Only three days later, and you participated in the bloody victory of Ferozeshah. This day, 39 years ago, an anniversary you are not likely to forget, the Governor-General of India, acting as Second-in-Command to the Commander-in-Chief, placed himself in front of the left wing of the Army, which advancing drove the enemy out of the village of Ferozeshah and their encampment, and, bearing down all opposition, completely routed the Sikh host, and captured no less than seventy-three pieces of those terrible cannon, which had played with murderous effect on the advancing line. The contest was worthy of the fame of the conflicting armies. The Sikhs lost heavily, and on the side of the British, the roll after the battle showed 2,415 gallant men had been killed or wounded. Throughout a day so stern you were at your father's side, you had your horse shot under you, and the Governor-General, in his despatch, wrote with his heart speaking through his pen, that his own personal staff had all been disabled, "with the exception of the one most dear to me, and who still remained by my side" when charging the Sikh batteries. But still more mighty blows had to be struck ere the Khalsa came reeling to the feet of the conquerors of India, and in

less than two months after Ferozeshah had been won, you were engaged in the bloodier and more decisive battle at Sobraon, where the Sikh army, all that remained of it, was forced back over the Sutlej from whence it had marched elate with hope, brave with pride, and confident of achieving the conquest of Hindostan. In the stress of a struggle that recalled the days of Wellesley and of Lake, the brave army of the Sutlej was encouraged and stimulated by the heroic conduct of their heroic Governor-General, of whom the Commander-in-Chief wrote that "though suffering severely from the effects of a fall, and unable to mount on horseback without assistance [one hand of the gallant veteran had been left on the field of Ligny], your uncontrollable desire to see this army once more triumphant carried you into the hottest of the fire, filling all who witnessed your exposure to such peril at once with admiration of the intrepidity that prompted it." You, sir, a boy of sixteen, rode fearless and unblenching, as became your race, by the side of the veteran of sixty "into the hottest of the fire," and you, sir, divided with the rest of the Governor-General's staff the praise of the Commander-in-Chief "for the brilliant share" taken by them in the stern and stubborn battle. In this wise ended the first, and a very gallant and glorious phase in your military career, and let me say that in these days of military gingerbread, when every

petty skirmish and insignificant feat of arms is, to suit the ends of designing commanders, magnified into a battle, it is good and useful to recall a historical fight, rich in grave consequences and in pride to the people whose splendid victories of less than forty years ago were gained by the British Army through sheer dint of pluck and fighting-power over the most gallant and formidable foes England has ever encountered in India before or since. From the field of Sobraon to the Sikh capital was the natural alternation—the outcome of the victory. It was an imposing and impressive ceremony in which you then took part, when you assisted in escorting back to his palace in the citadel of Lahore the boy Maharaja, Dhuleep Sing, after the Ministers and Chiefs who had served the old Sikh Lion had tendered their submission to the Governor-General, and had begged the clemency of the British Government at the hands of the man to whose skill, judgment, and personal valour their army had in a great measure owed its disastrous defeat. Beyond all question, such a war was a good school in which to begin your military education. You have succeeded better than, perhaps, you may be disposed to acknowledge even to yourself, and the father yet lives in the son. But England rarely allows her bravest swords to rust in idleness; only eight years had passed since your entrance into the city of the Sikhs when your experience proved of

true service to the brigade of Guards on the banks of the Alma. The young Aide-de-Camp developed, before the conclusion of the Crimean War, into an experienced and able Staff Officer, who, at Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman, and in the trenches before Sebastopol, during as hard and trying times as the British Army has ever known, had set a soldierly example of fortitude, patience, and cool-headed bravery. I regret, in common with the Army in general, that you have not as yet received that promotion which is your due, and which might well have been bestowed in the Order of the Bath to which you were admitted in 1857. You, however, received an especial recognition at the hands of your Queen in 1868, and still retain the distinction of being included among the Equerries of Her Majesty, a Sovereign whose heart is quick to appreciate her soldiers, whose instincts are those of a noble and dauntless nature, and who has for many years past stamped you with the favour of your countrymen by honouring you with her own approval. To the experience gained on the staff in the Crimea and at Home, you have added that of a regimental officer of the Guards. When, therefore, in 1873 you again arrived in India, you were able to exercise the command of a division in a way that was most advantageous to the Service and most creditable to yourself. A general favourite, respected and esteemed by all, a delightful

companion and friend to many, you left Meerut at the expiration of your tour of command regretted in a way which was the highest tribute to your character as a man and your worth as a soldier. You are now approaching the end of the fourth year of your successful administration of the Bombay Army. The native portion of that army is far better disciplined, better clothed, and better cared for than it has ever been in the past; you have too established its claim to take a share in whatever active service there may be going. Your untiring energy and intelligent endeavours have been rewarded, but without any sacrifice of your popularity. You have used to good purpose the steel hand in the velvet glove, and your candid and genial method of treating men and matters has brought you success, but without making you an enemy. In you the Bombay Presidency will lose an honest man and one of the ablest soldiers it has yet known—yet not altogether will it lose you, I trust; for, if your life be spared, as I sincerely hope it may be for many years to come, there are higher honours in store for you, in the exercise of which the Army of Bombay, as an integral part of the Army of India, will still share your watchful care and goodwill. General, though you will be much missed in Bombay, you will be very heartily welcomed at Calcutta, for you have grasped that highest conception of the duty of an English general—the bringing into noblest use the

highest qualities of the manhood given into your hand for the maintenance of the character of Englishmen at their best, and for the honour and safety, the security and the glory, of your native land.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXXV.

TO SIR LEPEL HENRY GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have never in the course of this series of letters, now drawing to a close, taken up my pen with more hesitation and diffidence than on the present occasion. Not only am I divided between admiration of your good qualities and the general aim of your public life, and recognition of the slight foibles and affectations which your name suggests to the gossipping Anglo-Indian, but I am ignorant whether you are to take the place at the Foreign Office of this Administration for which at the present moment you seem to be peculiarly fitted. After a long period of muddle and half-heartedness, England now appears to perceive that a foreign policy is not absolutely incompatible with liberal ideas, and with almost touching earnestness you have frequently proclaimed yourself a Liberal. But it were as easy for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, or for a leopard to change his spots,

as for an Anglo-Indian official in full work to become a thoroughgoing Liberal in the English sense of the word. The shibboleths of the party may be on his lips, and he may seek at every turn to identify himself with it ; but, as you have shown in your picturesque and almost lyric letter from the Red Sea, east of Suez, the point of view changes the mood, and the old masterful habit of mind which is fatal to the most cherished fantasies of modern Liberalism, asserts itself. In America, my dear sir, they tell a little story, which may there, perhaps, be held to score against you, but at which we in India can only smile. They say that, during your recent tour, one of the peacockvoiced daughters of the land thus addressed you—"But tell me now, Sir Lepel Griffin, what it is you *do* in India any way?" The speaker cannot have been very pretty or charming, for the grim reply was "What do you mean?" "Well, what is your business,—how do you get your living?" You are reported to have withered the lady with an ineffable look, and to have replied in these two monumental words—"I govern." That is the right Civilian temper. Whosoever will, may reconcile it with the doctrines and fancies of Mr. Gladstone's followers.

It must be confessed, however, that there are many Civilians of weight and standing who fail to live up to that great dictum ; who philanthropise, peddle with details, speculate, talk, dream, and muddle through a

long career, without having once had a firm grasp on the power that lay ready to their hands. It was your good fortune to perceive early in life that a strong will can lay hold of powers of more advantage than the crescendo series conferred on the young Civilian as he ascends the ordained steps of his service; and there are few men of your years who have had more practical experience of the art of governing.

When you first joined the Punjab Commission, it was illustrious for its piety. State dinners are generally dull, but never were they so dismal as when they served as the prelude to prayer meetings. The scandal of a small station is often pungent, but never so keen as when fed by a system of evangelical *espionage*, and when godly official superiors with the wives and spinsters of their families blacken a character in despair of saving a soul. Influences like these may have lent to some of your acts and utterances of that time the touch of defiance and aggressiveness of which your critics complain. For, though the *unco guid* are often admirable people, they have to answer for provoking wilful souls to impatient revolt against narrowness and stupidity. It was not surprising that among these good folk you gained a reputation as a dangerous dandy dowered with brains; and that your vanity was flattered by your being spoken of as a sort of Punjab Alcibiades. The learned Judge to whose officious

interference we in Calcutta mainly owe the commission of enquiry now sitting on our ill-used Municipality, once devoted his leisure to the more harmless pursuit of literature, some of whose bye-paths his discursive and superficial mind is fitted to follow. The Chronicles of Dustypore (Lahore), his one ewe-lamb of a novel, was supposed to be a picture gallery of Punjab personages, among whom you figured as the naughty man or Lothario. So far as I remember, the reader had to take the character a good deal on trust, hoping that in real life he was more amusing, dangerous and fascinating than in print. It is no business of mine, nor of the public, to decide on the *vraisemblance* of the picture, but it may be instanced as giving a by no means uncommon or unpopular view of your youth. It is one too on which the enemies you have made by an irrepressible contempt for stupidity, and a carefully cultivated faculty for biting and epigrammatic speech, are never tired of dwelling. Hairless elderly gentlemen found cause for offence in your hyacinthine curls, and the dainty feather tip in your hat; your clothes were too well cut for their ideal of solid worth, and an innocent congenital lisp was an unpardonable affectation to their sensitive, if somewhat extended, ears. They are welcome to such satisfaction as is to be gained by dwelling on the apparent foibles of a man who, on the whole, is strong; and I leave to them also

their expressions of sanctimonious regret, sure of this, that if there is any cause for regret at all, its keenest pang will be your own. But, in spite of an unctuous varnish of sanctity in high places, the Punjab was lively in those days. There was a future of improvement before it, new notions to promulgate, dullards and duffers to denounce, an iniquitous railway ring to unmask, and the local journal which did not then aspire to be a penny atlas or a geographical primer, was like its next door neighbour at Allahabad, a ready organ for articles on literary, local, social, and political topics. "Why," said a travelled Punjabi to me with a sort of awe—"he would actually write articles against himself!" I believe this as much as the American story; but it may stand as a not wholly insignificant local appreciation. But, while learning in the Punjab Secretariat that the Indian Government is, as you humorously expressed it—"a despotism of office-boxes tempered by the occasional loss of the key"—you also learned that no rapidity and readiness of judgment, and no facility in the despatch of business, will take the place of accurate knowledge and close application, and the contents of the boxes were thoroughly mastered. Mr. Samuel Smiles, himself, if happily he should turn his ingenious mind to the study of Anglo-Indian biography, could not find a more striking illustration of the doctrines he has so voluminously preached.

It was no wonder, then, that you rose, while it is a curious fact that your rise was not regarded by those of your contemporaries whom you outstripped in the race, with those feelings of envy that generally attend early success.

The incidents of the most successful official career, however, are seldom strongly marked, and it is unnecessary to enumerate at length your relatively short spells of executive duty, your work in the Secretariat, and your residence at Kapurthalla, until you succeeded Dr. Thornton as Secretary to the Government of the Punjab. The most important work of your pen was of necessity buried from the popular eye; but some things have been published which have attracted attention. Sounder sense and more trustworthy advice than is contained in your essays on the examinations for the Indian Civil Service have not been offered by any of the writers who have dealt with that subject, while each new batch of Civilians that arrives is a proof of the wisdom of your proposals and a fresh cause for regret that they have not been adopted. Your volumes on the history of the Rajahs and Chiefs of the Punjab are authentic documents, whose value must increase with years. It is to be regretted that the story of all the principal Houses of India has not been written with the same directness and veracity. There is now abroad a tendency to ignore the plain teaching of history for

the sake of a silly sentimentalism, and to paint the often hideous and generally sordid and ignoble features of native rule in a delusive rose colour. In the preface to one of these volumes, the key-note is sounded of a strain which may be traced in many of your more recent utterances. "Absolute power is a dangerous and often a fatal gift which few have been able to use wisely but the time will assuredly come when the enlightened policy of England in the East will be acknowledged by the world as her highest title to respect and honour.' It is through your defence of the India that English energy and skill have called into life that you seem likely to be most generally and most gratefully known The imperialism or jingoism that is natural to you may be tempered with Whig caution and accurate knowledge of Indian affairs; but there is no disguising it. You are one of India's champions against the noisy horde to whom the great Empire is an incubus of unwelcome dirt, to be shifted so soon as may be to other backs than ours. If you should even partially succeed in this cause, those who have the interests of the country at heart will not greatly care whether you are known as a Liberal or a Conservative.

There will always be room for contention concerning the recent Cabul campaigns, for but few of those who supported Lord Lytton's hasty advance, and still fewer of those who opposed it, knew the real facts of the

case. It was yours to wind up the business at the close, and lay the vexed question to rest for a season at least, and it is upon this feat that, from the popular point of view, your most substantial claim to the Foreign Office desk be based. Everybody knows it was a difficult task, embarrassed by a multitude of counsels; that the sword, in spite of Cicero's jingling line, was unwilling to give place to the gown, while a grim subject for amusement was furnished by the incapacity of English politicians to understand the elements of the question. More really amusing was a dinner given in your honour at Simla upon your return from those difficult negotiations when, with Sir Donald Stewart's face beaming with its unfulfilled promise of humour at your side, you extolled the military genius of General Roberts, made a bold declaration of your political principles, and hotly denounced all jingo works and ways. You may remember how, after this surprising oration, the company roared with laughter, when the gallant Foreign Office officer, who has so successfully led his little army to shoot pheasants on the banks of the Murghab, vehemently opposed your neatly-turned phrases with a delightful unskilfulness of speech; and declared himself an uncompromising Tory. To us in India it is of the smallest possible importance whether you or Colonel Ridgeway call yourselves buff or blue. But it is of some moment that you should be inspired by a just

sense of what is due to England, not by flattering the ignoble vanity known as jingoism, but by upholding the great traditions her sons have inherited. You have shown that you appreciate the position, and there are very many who would gladly see you placed where, by more than printed protestations, you could advance her honour and glory. I have left myself but little space wherein to speak of your American book. It is not a lovely, cheerful, or pleasant volume, and it treats of a country far removed from India and her most urgent concerns. I prefer to hear you on such topics as the measures necessary for the elevation of the female sex in this country, on the duties of the native Press, and other matters on which you are exceptionally well informed, and I decline to believe that, either you in six months, or Mr. Wilfred Blunt in three, can produce such a study of a country as will seriously increase the world's knowledge or soundly guide its judgment. And yet I dare say you consider the 'Great Republic' your best book.

I should not be greatly surprised either to learn that you esteem the occasional verses and *jeux d'esprit* which have appeared under your name quite as highly as your more serious work. Will you forgive me for remarking that though you may pride yourself on your lightness of hand, it is still too bold and heavy for complete success in this line. I remember a drawing-room

comedy of yours years ago at Simla on the well-worn, but never yet satisfactorily treated-women's rights question, which, without being particularly graceful or pretty, was distinctly weak in construction and laboured in dialogue. An epilogue, delivered as a sort of fare-well and winding-up to a Simla season, was better; but neither in this nor in other similar efforts was there any warrant for the reputation as a rapid and facile literateur which led all Northern India to ascribe to you the authorship of the memorable Ali Baba letters. I have often wondered, by-the-way, whether you could explain the reason why that charming writer and, personally, most amiable man could not in his work for the Indian Press keep his hands from you.

To him you were "our own glorious David, whose unctuous curls carry the elysian fragrance." Much that he wrote about the Gryphon was, in fact, down-right vulgarity and bad taste, and I have occasionally suspected that he resented the popular ascription of his work to your hand.

There is better work for you, believe me, sir, than mere *belles lettres*, or than acrimonious political writing. You can command the ear of a large English-speaking public, and you have a distinct and definite message to give them out of the fulness, though not completeness, of your knowledge of this country. Sir Richard Temple has tried to do it, but he is slipshod, tedious, and ver-

bose. No one can say at this moment what your political place may be; but you have it in your power to write the Indian book of the time.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

XXXVI.

TO THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF DUFFERIN, K. P., G. C. B., P. C., G. M. S. I., &C., &C.,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

MY LORD,—Although you have been so short a time amongst us, you have established your claim to a place in this series of letters by one great measure of law, by a certain showy vigour of administration, and by a confessed mistake. A great reputation is often a serious drawback, it commits its possessor to too much, and if it raise public expectation, it also tends to give a statesman a dangerous carelessness in the use of methods he has already found successful in other circumstances. The true science of government in a dependency like India is the wise interpretation of contrasts; yet you, my Lord, appear to consider that these require no interpretation at all. You have won fame and esteem as a pleasant author, as an administrator who knew how to mould men to his views, and as a diplomatist capable of fighting an even fight with the insincere Muscovite or

the subtle politicians of the Bosphorus. Further, your countrymen in India may be forgiven if, after the recent utterances of the Prime Minister, they see in your appointment a special reply to the diplomatic defeat inflicted upon Mr. Gladstone in November last by the Russian Chancellor,—the statesman you were at that time careful to hold up to all the world as your particular friend. With all this record in your favour of good work done, men still doubt whether you will be a success as an Indian Viceroy. Most Englishmen accustomed to political life, who come to India in middle age, revolt at what they consider the anomalous character of English rule in India. Knowing only the free life of their native island, they see their countrymen engaged in carrying out a despotism the most real and most scientific the world has ever seen. The work that has to be done becomes for the moment hidden by the methods employed; the necessities of England's position in India do not startle the visitor so much as the anomalies of that position and the departure from English practice which they involve. Englishmen new to India are thus apt, like Lord Ripon, to fall into exaggerations of sympathy with native grievances, and are very apt to turn away from a community of their countrymen who labour under a stress of responsibility only to be realised by those who have the true honour of sharing it. But in your case, sir, the usual insular

surprise of untravelled Englishmen ought to give place to a readiness of sympathy, springing from a varied experience of political conditions, in some cases not widely dissimilar to those which obtain in India, and in all differing radically from the intensely selfish and concentrated life of London. Few men who escape from party warfare at Home can detect how completely their countrymen in India represent all that is new in the country, all that makes for progress amongst the people; or can comprehend that in this land of simple mysteries and long-descended anomalies, there is, side by side with the inherited stagnation of long centuries passed in a religious parcelling out of the people, a full earnest, active, pushing tide of life, for a parallel to which we must turn to the newest States of the American Union, the newest of the Canadian territories, or the most successful of the Australian Colonies. The railway runs to Benares; yet who will say the life of the city is changed, that its ways are altered, or that there is more than contact merely between the railway platform and the ancient ways of the streets of the holy city,—customs and habits, modes of thought and action, among which it is easy to find illustrations of some of the oldest stories known to mankind,—stories of the very infancy of the human race! How can there be a mingling between the platform and the city when the iron road of the railway is not more sternly and

immovably bound to progress than the city to a condition of society which in its quiet pride is justified, by its past victories, if it feel a contempt for change? A statesman who has witnessed Oriental methods of rule in Turkey, and who has noted the survival of ancient usages in Egypt, ought scarcely to feel himself a stranger in India. A Governor who has led the progress of a young community in Canada ought to comprehend the progress won for India by Anglo-Indians,—a community far younger than even Canada, and who have triumphed in the interests of the natives in spite of the utter denial to them of native sympathy and native aid. Yet, although, sir, no man ever came to India, came to the exercise of supreme authority in this country, so well equipped by experience to step at once into success as yourself;—although no Viceroy ever was, or probably ever will be, received on all sides with hearts so open, or minds so ready to adopt and praise, you have not yet come up to public expectation, or done more than chill sympathy and provoke doubt of your ability to be a great Viceroy. I fear whatever of fair fortune the future may hold for you—and personally I believe it is bright with glory for yourself and fame for England—the opinion of you to-day is one of pained and wondering disappointment. You have almost created an impression that you regret having consented to succeed Lord Ripon.

My Lord, you have been too soothing and too patronising. Nothing attracts like the courtesy of the heart, nothing can compare as a mode of patronising with the courtesy of habit. Your courtesy met a want and would have been welcomed, would even thus early have won for you affectionate respect and esteem, if it had been somewhat less affected; and yet you have done more towards fulfilling your social duties in the four months you have been in India than your predecessor did in the whole four years of his residence in this country. Why, then, you may fairly ask, are you not more successful? My Lord, the Indian community is not unreasonable, but you have rated it too low. You have not appreciated its essential manliness and strength, its earnestness, its gladness in its work, and its honest and fruitful pride in its responsibilities, and in the way it discharges them. You have misunderstood India, native and European; and beyond all doubt, thus far, India does not understand you. There is a disheartening conflict between the lofty ideal conjured up by your words, and the commonplace devotion to party and predecessor displayed by your actions. You are Lord Dufferin in society and on the platform, but in the Council Chamber you are the nominee of Lord Kimberley—the continuation of Lord Ripon. Is it any wonder that men are already learning to turn from you, careless of understanding you,

and only watchful, not of your intentions, but of your mistakes? You have spoken much during the last four months, but no man is the wiser for anything you have said. You have had great opportunities of calming the public mind, of reassuring those who doubt, and of inspiring pride and confidence; and yet no man who believed in you in November, feels to-day that you are a safe match for the keen and unscrupulous Chief you are about to meet. No one can turn to any reassurance you have given, and feel that you have gripped the strength of India, or measured yourself with the emergency you were sent to India to confront. Platitudes have a use of their own; when resorted to judiciously, they flatter and soothe an audience, whilst they excuse and save a speaker. But there are times when platitudes are almost an insult. You, my Lord, have been altogether too platitudinarian. Your smile, ever ready, has been too child-like, too bland. It has rebuked a community for believing that a great crisis has arrived, and has angered men who desired to be led, not to be amused. I will try to make my meaning clear by two extracts from your speeches. At the Trades' Dinner on January 30th, you spoke of—

"—a justice which neither prejudice nor self-interest can pervert."

In the same speech, but a little further on, you declared your voice was that of the Queen, the people, and the Parliament of England—

"—who are absolutely determined that the British rule in India shall be so blamelessly and vigorously conducted as to prove the crowning glory of our country's history, and that any grievance and wrong of which Her Majesty's subjects can complain, whether princes or people, whether native or British born, shall be examined into, and, so far as the imperfections of all human administrations will allow, abated or redressed."

My Lord, what is justice? Six weeks after that proud and lofty sketch of England's duty to India, you permitted the Legislative Council over which you preside to pass, in spite of the tears and remonstrances of the natives, and the indignant warnings of the Europeans, that measure of doubt and that law of trouble—the Bengal Tenancy Act. On March 12th, in the final debate on this Act, you remarked:—

"—nor is it within the province of the Government of India to enter into compromises. The Government of India distributes justice—"

Is it justice to act as if public opinion is nought, to legislate in defiance of the doubts of the Council, and the fears of the millions for whom the laws are supposed to be made? Is the Government of which you are the head to set up for infallibility, and to proceed from conflict to conflict? Is it for an English statesman new to India and to work in India, to deny the highest duty which can fall to him to fulfil—the right of compromising between what is needed and what is possible?

The British Government distributes justice, and does not enter into compromises—in the last case it will pursue any quarrel with the public to the bitter end, and in the former it plunges the largest province of the Empire into an exasperation of litigation. The prospect placed before India by such assertions, and your Lordship's interpretation of them, has dulled the hopes felt in your advent, and disposed all men to distrust a ruler who is haughty in the wrong place, and who besides protests too much.

A certain anxiety is felt about your conference with the Ameer. If you have failed to understand people in Calcutta, how will you see through the stubborn selfishness and wily frankness which make an Afghan the most unscrupulous and faithless of mankind,—a creature who is manly yet mean; open as the day, yet wholly to be disbelieved; who is fierce and courageous, yet capable of unhesitating cowardice, and who knows that he has a firm grip upon English self-interest? My Lord, I wish you a safe deliverance all the more that you are employed by a Minister who spoilt Lord Mayo's interview with Ameer Sher Ali, and who even now is seen to exhibit every quality of a Government but courage, firmness, and resolution.

My Lord, three months ago I should have written of you only smooth things; my task would have been both easy and pleasant, for it would have dealt with hopes

at their brightest, and good wishes at their freshest. If I have now written of you in doubt, it is because I am after all but a reflection of the opinions of those with whom I have lived too long not to apprehend something of their thoughts. There is a great work in India ready to your hand, if only you will go back to the traditions of a time when the exigencies of party in England were held to be a wrong and an injustice in India. You are the guardian, not of the interests only but of the future of the Indian peoples,—their bulwark abroad, their guide and friend at home. You will not undo the tangle of their affairs left by Lord Ripon by trying to smooth his blunders over; a tangle must be unravelled. Your path, my Lord, is a thorny one; yet if you appreciate how thoroughly your difficulties are understood, and how real and living is the sympathy with the position in which you are placed, you will cease to try to be an oracle, cease to speak in platitudes, but gathering to yourself the loyalty and the respect of the Indian communities, and because of the strength which shall be born of that respect and loyalty, you will meet triumphantly the difficulties which now press so hardly against you, and give to Englishmen a new example, and a name they will prize, as they now cherish the names of Clive and Dalhousie, Canning and Mayo.

Yours faithfully,

SADYK DOST.

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